साधारण

जोइन्टी

00066960

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY-1.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016

Literary Society of Bombay
1220 D 31

DISCOURSES

CONCERNING THE

TRUTH

OF THE

Chriſtian Religion.

The SECOND EDITION.

66960

LONDON:
Printed for JOHN WHISTON, in *Fleet-Street.*

MDCCXLVII.

1747

00066960

PREFACE.

THERE is a ſyſtem relating to religion and to the ſtate of things which is certainly true, whether we believe it or no. It greatly concerns us to have right notions about it, and to provide, as far as we can, for our future well-being, if this life ſhould be the paſſage to another.

To ſhew that there is ſufficient evidence of the truth of Chriſtianity, to illuſtrate ſome parts of it, and to defend it againſt ſome objections, is the *deſign of the following Diſcourſes, to which before I diſmiſs the Reader, I beg leave to detain him a few minutes, whilſt I make an apology for this undertaking againſt an obvious objection.*

Many are the books already extant upon the ſubject; Fabricius *has reckoned up ſome hundreds~~, and doubt~~leſs ſeveral treatiſes might be added which have eſcaped even his diligence. What occaſion is there for any more, in a country which has produced ſo many excellent writers in the cauſe, and where learned perſons are continually appointed to diſcourſe* profeſſedly *upon it?*

As to the number of treatiſes, it may be replied, that ſome of them are *grown very ſcarce, and others are fallen into oblivion, for which reaſon an Author may be permitted to ſtep in and take a place made vacant by one who is now* * *gone to reſt. And though it be preſumption to think of equalling the great men who have laboured before us, and whoſe reputation is eſtabliſhed, yet ſince there are many who had rather peruſe a* † *new book than a good book, their humour ſhould not be totally diſregarded.*

The ſame truths may be placed in various views; and amongſt men whoſe taſte and fancy differ ſo widely, an argument ſhall ſeem perſuaſive, and a remark pertinent to one,

---

[*] Nunc placida compoſtus pace quieſcit.

[†] Τὴν γὰρ ἀοιδὴν μᾶλλον ἐπικλείουσ᾽ ἄνθρωποι,
Ἥτις ἀκουόντεσσι νεωτάτη ἀμφιπέληται.
Homer. Odyſſ. A. 351.

which by another is ſlighted and re-jected. It ſeems therefore convenient that ſeveral perſons ſhould try their ſkill, and propoſe their thoughts upon a matter of ſuch importance, ſince every one may reaſonably hope to gain over, or confirm, or ſecure ſome reader of a correſponding turn of mind. Even the weakeſt contriver of a fooliſh and forlorn ſyſtem muſt be very unlucky, if he finds not a few approvers and followers: he poſſeſſes at leaſt a quality ſomewhat like electricity, which attracts chaff and ſtraws; and what the old Greek *Poet obſerved in his days is as true now;*

> *Ὡς αἰεὶ τὸν ὁμοῖον ἄγει θεὸς ὡς τὸν ὁμοῖον*
> ——— Some overruling Pow'r
> Ever delights to couple like to like.

The underſtandings of men are as the chords of muſical inſtruments: when

when a ſtring ſounds, the ſtrings which are uniſons to it, if within proper diſtance, will vibrate.

None then ought to be diſcouraged, though his abilities be no more than common, from appearing in defence of truths in which all are intereſted. Invention, Wit, Sagacity, Eloquence, *when they offer their ſervice on this occaſion, merit a kind reception. Behind theſe follows modeſt and ſlow-paced* Induſtry, *willing to take the loweſt place, and yet ſometimes more uſeful than ſome of the former, and verifying the proverb,* Claudus viator omnia refert certiora, A lame traveller brings the beſt intelligence.

If, amidſt ſome imperfections, an argument, which is not new, be ſet in a new light, if an objection be removed,

moved,' if a ſentiment be ſo expreſſed as to leave a good effect upon the mind, if an ingenious, or uſeful, or remarkable paſſage, not commonly known, be produced from an ancient Writer, if ſomewhat be ſuggeſted worthy of conſideration, and the Reader be put upon thinking, and the Author perform the humble office of an Index which points out the roads to the paſſenger, the work ought not to be treated with contempt.

Shall I add yet farther, that ſuch perſons deſerve ſomething beyond a bare permiſſion to utter their thoughts? When the intention ſeems upright, and the end propoſed is to make men better and wiſer, what is not ill executed ſhould be received with approbation, with good words and *good wiſhes, and ſmall faults and inadvertencies ſhould be candidly excuſed. Much more than this it may be vanity or folly to expect.*

And here I thought to have concluded; but theſe words of Grotius *come ſo often into my mind, that I cannot forbear to cite them.* Lapſum Origenem in quibuſdam rebus negari non poteſt. Quale mihi nequid eveniat, Deum ſupplex precor, ſoleoque ſcriptis meis hanc addere cautionem, ut ſi quid ibi ſit alienum dogma [*a veritate et ſacris Literis*] id pro non ſcripto habeatur.

In this I would willingly join with Grotius. *Whoſoever is in the diſpoſition which he deſcribes, takes the beſt way to ſecure himſelf from* *dangerous errors; and if he has any wrong notions, there is reaſon to hope that they proceed not from a bad mind, but are* only the Iſſues of unfortunate Inquiry.

JOHN JORTIN.

CONTENTS.

THE prejudices of the Jews *and* Gentiles. Page 1.

II.

The propagation of the Goſpel. P. 87.

III.

The kingdom of Chriſt. P. 117.

IV.

The fitneſs of the time when Chriſt came into the world. P. 158.

V.

The teſtimony of John *the Baptiſt.* P. 176.

VI.

The Scriptures of the New Teſtament. P. 203.

VII.

The Goſpel, as it is grace and truth. P. 235.

ERRATA.

PAGE 56. note. line 16. read *σωτηείας*. p. 68. note. l. 11. r. *elegantiam.* p. 124. l. 12. r. hearts. p. 147. l. 13. r. conſpicuous. p. 175. not. l. 1. r. *ἡμέραις*.

ADDENDA.

Page 51. l. 17. ſome * were remarkable for all wickedneſs.

* Dedimus profecto grande patientiæ documentum, et ſicut vetus ætas vidit quid ultimum in libertate eſſet, ita nos quid in ſervitute, ademto per inquiſitiones et loquendi audiendique commercio. Memoriam quoque ipſam cum voce perdidiſſemus, ſi tam in noſtrâ poteſtate eſſet oblivíſci quam tacere. *Tacitus* Vit. Jul. Agric. 2.

P. 57. not. l. 11. *add:* The civility and decency of *Athenagoras* is no leſs remarkable in his *Apology.*

P. 83. not. laſt l. *add: Father Paul,* being asked by a friend how he could hold communion with the church of *Rome,* reply'd: *Deus non dedit mihi ſpiritum Lutheri.* See *Burnet's* Life of *Bedell,* p. 16.

udices of the JEWS *and* GENTILES.

WHEN we read over the hiſtory of *Chriſt*, and conſider the variety of beneficial miracles which he wrought, and his mild and inoffenſive behaviour, it muſt at firſt ſight ſeem very ſtrange that the *Jews* ſhould reject him and put him to death; that they, who had ſo long expected and ſo greatly deſired the coming of the *Meſſias*, ſhould perſecute and kill him when he appeared amongſt them, and ſo well confirmed his right to the character which he aſſumed.

When we conſider farther how the Apoſtles afterwards confirmed the truth of his reſurrection, how many miracles they wrought, teaching the ſame holy doctrines as their Maſter had taught, and imitating his good example, and how innocent and virtuous the behaviour of the firſt Chriſtians was, it ſeems alſo ſtrange that the *Jewiſh* nation ſhould not have yielded to ſuch evidence.

And though the Apoſtles had great ſucceſs in the heathen world, and brought over multitudes to the faith, yet it appears unaccountable that more of the *Gentiles* were not moved to receive the Goſpel by the miracles which they wrought in its behalf, and that few of the rich, of the great, and of the learned were at firſt converted.

We are inclined to think that if we had lived in thoſe days, and ſeen what the *Jews* and *Gentiles* then ſaw, we ſhould readily have embraced the Goſpel, and that if any perſon in our ſight ſhould heal all diſtempers, and remove all infirmities, and raiſe the dead, we ſhould ſubmit to any thing that he commanded, and receive any thing that he taught, unleſs it were plainly abſurd and contrary to common ſenſe. They who reject* the Goſpel, object to the miracles recorded in it, that the bulk of the Jewiſh nation was not converted by them, and that in the Pagan world the poorer and meaner ſort of the people were chiefly the firſt proſelytes to the Chriſtian religion, and the learned and powerful for the moſt part ſtood out; till at length the Roman Emperors became Chriſtians, and what by force, what by example, brought their opinion into faſhion, and eſtabliſhed it in the world.

---

* See *Limborch* Collat. cum Judæo, p. 63. where the *Jew* uſes this kind of argument.

But whoſoever ſhall well conſider the many cauſes concurring to keep the *Jews* and *Gentiles* from embracing the Goſpel, will ceaſe to judge it ſtrange that ſo many of them perſevered in their unbelief.

One great and general cauſe to which the infidelity of the *Jews* ſhould be aſcribed, is their wickedneſs; and that certainly is a cauſe ſufficient to produce ſuch an effect. If a man is vitious, he is diſpoſed to reject evident truths, and to embrace ridiculous opinions. That vice weakens the underſtanding, infatuates the judgment, and hinders it from diſcerning between truth and falſehood, eſpecially in matters of morality and religion, is affirmed conſtantly in Scripture, is highly agreeable to reaſon, and perpetually teſtified by experience. That the *Jews* were then very wicked is plain from ſeveral paſſages of the New Teſtament, and * *Joſephus* informs us of enormous villanies practiſed by many of them, of which no Pagan nation was perhaps ever guilty.

Suppoſe a man ſenſual and debauched, proud and conceited, uncharitable and malicious, unjuſt and worldly-minded, ſuppoſe him not to have been educated in groſs ignorance of his duty, but to have had ſufficient opportunities of acquiring ſome degrees of ſacred knowledge, and by his evil diſpoſition to have been led either to diſbelieve plain truths, or to continue in ſin againſt the dictates of his own conſcience, or to find out ſome ways of reconciling his religion with his vices; ſuppoſe ſuch a one has the Goſpel preach'd to him by an Apoſtle, and confirmed by ſigns and wonders, there is no reaſon to conclude that he will receive it, that he will ſubmit to a religion which is attended with many temporal inconveniences, and which upon all accounts he deſpiſes and hates, that he will alter his whole courſe of life, and become a poor and perſecuted diſciple of Chriſt, and enter into his Church.

---

* *Vid.* B. J. iv. v. vi. *paſſim.*

Καθέκαστον μὲν οὖν ἐπεξιέναι τὴν παρανομίαν αὐτῶν, ἀδύνατον. συνελόντα δ' εἰπεῖν, μήτε πόλιν ἄλλην τοιαῦτα πεπονθέναι, μήτε γενεὰν ἐξ αἰῶνος γεγονέναι κακίας γονιμωτέραν. v. x. 5.

Οἶμαι Ῥωμαίων βραδυνόντων ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀλιτηρίους, ἢ καταποθῆναι ἂν ὑπὸ χάσματος, ἢ κατακλυσθῆναι τὴν πόλιν, ἢ τοὺς τῆς Σοδομηνῆς μεταλαβεῖν κεραυνούς. πολὺ γὰρ τῶν ταῦτα παθόντων ἔνεγκε γενεὰν ἀθεωτέραν. v. xiii. 6. *Ed. Haverc.*

To give a particular account of all their iniquities, would be endleſs; thus much, in general, it may ſuffice to ſay, that there never was a city which ſuffered ſuch miſeries, nor a race of men from the beginning of the world who ſo abounded in wickedneſs.

I verily believe that if the *Romans* had delayed to deſtroy theſe wicked wretches, the city would either have been ſwallowed up by the earth, or overwhelmed by the waters, or ſtruck with fire from heaven as another *Sodom*; for it produced a far more impious generation than thoſe who ſuffered ſuch puniſhment.

I know, it may be ſaid that among the firſt Chriſtians there were * ſeveral who had led bad lives before; but there are many degrees

---

* Ἡμεῖς δὲ, ſays *Origen*, εἴ τις καταvοήσαι ἡμῶν εὐγνωμόνως τὸ ἄθροισμα, πλείονας ἔχομεν παραστῆσαι τοὺς οὐκ ἀπὸ χαλεποῦ πάνυ βίου ἤπερ τοὺς ἀπὸ ἐξωλεστάτων ἁμαρτημάτων ἐπιστρέψαντας. καὶ γὰρ πεφύκασιν οἱ τὰ κρείττονα ἑαυτοῖς συνεγνωκότες, εὐχόμενοι ἀληθῆ εἶναι τὰ κηρυσσόμενα περὶ τῆς ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῖς κρείττοσιν ἀμοιβῆς, ἑτοιμότερον συγκατατίθεσθαι τοῖς λεγομένοις, παρὰ τοὺς πάνυ μοχθηρῶς βεβιωκότας.—If any one will candidly conſider us Chriſtians, we can produce him more who have been converted from a life not the worſt, than from a very wicked courſe.

degrees in wickedneſs, and there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe that theſe ſinners were for the moſt part of the worſt ſort; and though ſome perſons who have been very wicked may become very good, and ſuch were found amongſt the firſt Chriſtians, yet where the exceptions are few, the general obſervation is not affected by them; for thus much is certain, that an honeſt mind is a great help to underſtand the truth, that the practice of Morality leads to the practice of Chriſtianity, and that, ſince converſion is brought about by ſteps, and revealed religion is founded on natural religion, he who is moved to embrace the Goſpel muſt be firſt ſenſible of the difference between good and evil, truth and falſehood, virtue and vice, muſt love the one and abhor the other, muſt repent of his former trangreſſions and receive the ſacred knowledge, which is offered to him, with gratitude and a firm reſolution of performing his duty. He therefore who can call evil good, and

For they, whoſe conſcience ſpeaks favourably in their behalf, are diſpoſed to wiſh that our doctrine concerning the future rewards of goodneſs may be true; and ſo are more ready to aſſent to the Goſpel than profligate men. *Contr.* Celſ. iii. *p.* 150.

good evil, who is totally corrupted in heart and underſtanding, is removed at an infinite diſtance from God and righteouſneſs, has no ears to hear, and no eyes to ſee, not even to ſee miracles, ſo as to be inſtructed and amended by them.

To this general cauſe the unbelief of the *Jews* may be aſcribed, as alſo to ſeveral prejudices which they had againſt the perſon of Chriſt, and the doctrines of the Goſpel.

The *Jews were offended at Chriſt*, becauſe he was not received and followed by thoſe of the moſt learning and authority amongſt them. *Have any of the rulers, or of the Phariſees believed on him?*

We may then ſuppoſe that a *Jew* who rejected the Goſpel would have argued thus: It becomes a private man not to lean too much to his own underſtanding, but to ſuppoſe that they who have ſtudied the laws of God more than himſelf, and are appointed of God to be his inſtructors, are better judges in religious controverſies than he can poſſibly be. Our ſpiritual guides are all of opinion that Jeſus is not the Meſſias. It is therefore the moſt modeſt, rational, and ſafe way for me, who have not their leiſure, learning and abilities, to ſubmit and truſt to their deciſions.

Here is a prejudice founded upon the doctrine that private perſons, eſpecially they who are ignorant and illiterate, ſhould follow the judgment of the Church, of their guides and teachers. This doctrine has ſomething plauſible in it, and under certain limitations and reſtrictions may be admitted.

The vulgar ought indeed to pay a great regard to their teachers, and are often under a neceſſity of admitting many things upon their authority; but then we muſt except things plain * in their own nature, in a word, every thing in which the reaſon of one man is as good a judge as the reaſon of another, in which a man knows that he wants no guide, and therefore ſhould ſubmit to none.

This is the caſe before us. Every *Jew* in *Jeruſalem* was as competent a judge of a miracle as the high prieſt, and if he ſaw Chriſt raiſe a man from the dead, and perform a variety of wonderful works, might conclude with full aſſurance, and without any danger of miſtaking, that God would never ſuffer a deceiver to do ſuch works in his name, who taught nothing contrary to common ſenſe.

---

* See *Whitby* Serm. on *John* viii. 37. in his *Comment.* vol. I.

In ſuch a caſe as this, a *Jew* who ſubmitted to the authority of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, of the chief prieſts and rulers, againſt plain evidence, abſolutely renounced all uſe of reaſon, after which it would have been ridiculous *in him to talk of the reaſonableneſs* of following his guides, the reaſonableneſs of rejecting private judgment; for * what had ſuch a one to do with reaſon?

The *Jews* were offended at Chriſt, becauſe he was not a temporal prince and a conqueror. They were all perſuaded that the Meſſias ſhould be a great king, under whom they ſhould rule over the *Gentiles*; and live in wealth and pleaſure.

When therefore they found that Chriſt was poor and deſpiſed, and died an ignominious death, and that his kingdom, as his Apoſtles taught, was a ſpiritual kingdom eſtabliſhed in the heart of men, a kingdom not of this world, the croſs of Chriſt proved a ſtumbling-block to them; and they were diſpleaſed with a doctrine that ſuited neither with their prejudices nor with their inclinations.

---

* See *Wollaſton* Rel. of Nat. ſect. iii. p. 49. firſt ed.

They had indeed ſeveral arguments to offer in behalf of this prejudice, which, though they are weak if they be compared with the ſuperior evidences of the truth of the *Goſpel*, yet have a fair appearance when they are conſidered by themſelves, and therefore deſerve to be anſwered.

1. In the firſt place, as their Law contained ſeveral promiſes to the obedient, and thoſe promiſes were temporal, it was not to be thought ſtrange that the *Jews* ſhould have accounted proſperity a mark of God's favour, and adverſity of his diſpleaſure. This laid a foundation for a prejudice againſt Chriſt and his Apoſtles.

2. Almoſt all the great and good men recorded in the Scriptures, whom God had raiſed up from time to time to be their princes and leaders, were miraculouſly bleſſed with ſucceſs in their undertakings. The *Jews* therefore expected that the *Meſ-*

ſias, when he appeared, ſhould ſurpaſs Moſes and Joſhua, and David, and the Maccabees, and other of their victorious kings and leaders, as much in ſplendor and felicity; as in dignity and authority.

3. To confirm them in this expectation, there were ſeveral propheſies applied by all the Jews to the Meſſias, which repreſent him as a powerful prince, who ſhould ſave and protect his people and overcome his enemies; and which ſpeak in magnificent terms of the peace and proſperity of his happy reign.

But it is eaſy to ſhew that theſe objections againſt our Saviour were not ſufficient to excuſe their unbelief.

For, though the Law promiſed temporal bleſſings to the good, yet the Jews knew by long experience that thoſe promiſes had not been fulfilled at all times, and to all perſons. Extraordinary interpoſitions in behalf of the righteous were grown leſs frequent, which was an intimation of a future ſtate, and an argument by which it might be proved. The Jews therefore had no reaſon to judge of the characters and merits of men by their ſtation and circumſtances in this life; or to imagine that *fortunate* and *virtuous* were the ſame thing.

They might have found examples of good men who had undergone much trouble, and had received here below no reward of their obedience.

They might have learned from the Prophets that the *Meſſias*, to whom ſo much power and proſperity and ſplendor was *promiſed, was alſo to* be a man * of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief, and that his ſoul was to be an offering for ſin; and they might have ſeen, in the ſufferings of Chriſt, and in his reſurrection, the accompliſhment of theſe ſeemingly irreconcileable predictions.

Laſtly; if ſome particular propheſies concerning the reign of the Meſſias appeared to them unfulfilled, they ought not upon that account to have rejected Chriſt: They ſhould have reſted ſatisfied with the various proofs which he gave them of his divine power, and have concluded, either that they did not underſtand the true ſenſe of

---

[*] Some of them ſeem to have known and believed it. See *Whitby* on *Epheſ.* i. 4.

thoſe propheſies, or that the time of their completion was not yet come.

They were offended at him, becauſe, as they ſaid, he profaned the Sabbath-day, that is, did not obſerve it according to their ſuperſtitious manner.

But Chriſt, as the great Prophet, and a worker of miracles, according to the example of other prophets, and according to the deciſions of the *Jews* themſelves, had a power of ſetting aſide the ceremonial reſt of the Sabbath, or any other ritual law. Thus *Joſhua* commanded that the ark of God ſhould be carried round *Jericho*, the armed men going before and after it, ſeven days together, one of which muſt have been a Sabbath; thus *Elijah* and *Eliſha* touched and handled dead bodies, to reſtore them to life, and did not account themſelves legally unclean; thus *Samuel* and *Elijah* offered ſacrifices, though neither of them were prieſts, and in places where, as ſome think, ſacrifices could not be offered according to the law. In a word, it * appears that many ceremonial laws were at certain times generally diſuſed, and unobſerved by very good men.

---

* *J. Hales* Sermon on *John* xviii. 36. p. 160. *Le Clerc* on 1 *Sam.* vii. 17. *Grotius* on *Luke* vii. 14. It is certain that the Sabbatic years and the Jubilees were greatly neglected

They were offended, ſome of them at leaſt, becauſe he did not live in a way more auſtere, and in their opinion more becoming the dignity which he aſſumed; becauſe he condeſcended to converſe with people of bad reputation, with Publicans and ſinners.

Some were offended at him, becauſe, ſaid they,* we know whence he is, but when Chriſt cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

Some were offended, becauſe he was not of *Bethlehem*, where it was foretold that the Meſſias ſhould be born. A little enquiry would have ſet them right, if they had taken any pains to find out the truth.

They were offended at him becauſe he had dwelt in *Galilee*, out of which place

---

ected by the *Jews*, as probably were many other ceremonial laws. Yet we learn from *Joſephus* i. p. 657, and 741. *Ed. Haverc.* that in the Days of *Herod* the Great, and ſome time at leaſt, before, the Sabbatic years were obſerved. See *Prideaux* in the *Pref.* to his *Connect.* who has not taken notice of this.

* See the *Comment.* on *Joh.* vii. 27.

no prophet could ever ariſe, as they fooliſhly ſuppoſed.

Chriſt had dwelt at Nazareth till he entered into his office; his relations dwelt there: the inhabitants of that place were acquainted with his perſon, and remembered his education; they knew that he had had no opportunity of acquiring the learning which could qualify him to be a teacher. When they heard the force and the wiſdom with which he ſpake, and were informed of his mighty works, and ſaw ſome of them, they were aſtoniſhed, and yet they could not pay him a due reſpect; they * ſlighted him, becauſe they knew him, and the poverty of his family, and the obſcurity in which he had lived amongſt them, and having long view'd him as their equal, they could not ſubmit to ſhew him the veneration due to a prophet. It is very likely that ſome envy was mixed with their prejudice. *Whence*, ſaid they, *hath this man this wiſdom, and theſe mighty works?* Whence could he have his power of working miracles unleſs from God? and whence could he have his wiſdom, unleſs from him alſo? They, of all people, ſhould have been the readieſt to believe in him, becauſe knowing well that he had been deprived of the ordinary means of receiving inſtruction, and of acquiring the knowledge which appeared in all that he ſpake, they had a clear evidence that it muſt have been a ſupernatural gift.

---

* So the *Ægyptians* at firſt deſpiſed their king *Amaſis*, on account of his extraction and former condition; τὰ μὲν δὴ πρῶτα κατώνοντο τὸν Ἄμασιν Αἰγύπτιοι, καὶ ἐν οὐδεμιῇ μοίρῃ μεγάλῃ ἦγον, ἅτε δὴ δημότην τὸ πρὶν ἐόντα, καὶ οἰκίης οὐκ ἐπιφανέος. *Herodot.* ii. 172. p. 155.

They were offended at him, becauſe in his diſcourſes to them he ſometimes gave them hints that he was a much greater perſon than they imagined, upon which they called him a blaſphemer, who made himſelf God, and equal with God, that is, who aſſumed to himſelf divine honours and more reſpect than was due to a prophet; for the *Jews** had no notion that their Meſſias ſhould be any thing more than mere man.

The *Jews*, as appears from *Juſtin*'s *Dialogue* with *Trypho*, objected to the Chriſtians, that they worſhipped more Gods than one,

---

* *Whitb*, on *Rom.* ix. 5. and *Juſtin M.* p. 235.

one; and aſcribed divine perfections to Chriſt.

To this * *Juſtin*, and other Chriſtians, anſwered, that frequent mention is made in the Old Teſtament of a perſon, who is † called God, and is God, and yet is diſtinguiſh'd from the God and Father of all.

Beſides; ‡ *Philo*, and ſeveral of their own writers taught ſomething ſo like the Chriſtian doctrine concerning the Son and the Spirit of God, that the *Jews*, if they condemned the Goſpel upon that account, condemned themſelves.

We read in the Scriptures that God is no object of our ſenſes, that he has no body or form, that he is the inviſible God, whom no man hath ſeen or can ſee. And in many of the manifeſtations which God made of himſelf, nothing appeared, except a glorious light, a cloud and fire, or elſe only a voice was heard. But in other places it is ſaid that God himſelf appeared. To reconcile which, the ancient Chriſtian writers generally agree, and their conſent ought not to be ſlighted, that the* perſon who appeared at different times to *Adam*, to *Abraham*, to *Moſes*, to the elders of *Iſrael*, to the Patriarchs and Prophets, and to other good men, who would not tell his name to *Jacob* and to *Manoah*, when they aſked him who he was, who is called both God and the Angel of God, that this perſon was the Word of God, the Son of God, who was in the form of God, who was the viſible image of the inviſible God, repreſenting the majeſty of his Father, and acting in his name.

---

* See the Index to *Thirlby*'s Juſtin, *Chriſtus*.

† Θεὸς καλεῖται, καὶ Θεός ἐστι καὶ ἔσται. *Juſtin*, p. 261.

‡ *Grotius* de Ver. R. C. v. 21. *Vitringa* on *Iſai*. vol. ii. p. 458. not. *Le Clerc* on *Job*. i. *Fabric*. de Ver. R. C. p. 132.

---

* See *Bull,* Defenſ. Fid. Nic. *Clarke* Repl. to *Nelſ.* p. 161. and Serm. 5. vol. 1. *Whitby* on *Joh.* i. 1 *Cor.* x. 9. *Philipp.* ii. 6. *Col.* i. 15. *Vitringa* on *Iſai.* lxiii. 9, 10. p. 249. and on *Zech.* i. 11, 12, p. 131. concerning the Angel who intercedes with God for the *Jews.*

Some think that where the Angel of the Lord is mentioned, no other is meant than one of thoſe miniſtring ſpirits, who ſometimes repreſented the perſon of God, acted in his ſtead and ſpake in his name; and then, ſay they, whatever honour and adoration might be ſeemingly paid to him, was really paid to God, to whom it was deſigned, and whom the Angel perſonated. See *Le Clerc* in Indice ad *Pentat.* ANGELUS. and the Commentators on *Heb.* ii. 2. and 5. and *Clemens Alex.* Strom. v. 1. p. 648. Edit. *Potter.*

The Angel who appeared to * *Manoah*, (*Judg.* xiii. 18.) ſaid to him, *Why aſkeſt thou after my name, ſeeing it is ſecret*, or *wonderful?* If we compare this with *Iſaiah* ix. 6. it is there ſaid of the Meſſiah, *his name ſhall be called, Wonderful.* If we compare it with *Rev.* xix. 12. it is there ſaid of Chriſt, *He had a name written which none knew but he himſelf.*

Concerning this Angel † *Iſaiah* thus ſpeaks, celebrating God's loving-kindneſs to the children of *Iſrael* in ancient times: *The Angel of God's preſence ſaved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the days of old.*

Theſe great things are here aſcribed to the Angel of God's preſence, or, of his face; which if we compare with the hiſtory of thoſe tranſactions, as related by *Moſes*, we find that God almighty manifeſted himſelf to *Moſes* by an Angel. *The Angel of the Lord appeared to him in the buſh, and ſaid, I am the God of Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob;*

---

* See *Vitringa* on *Iſai.* ix. 5, 6.

† lxiii. 9. Where ſee *Vitringa*.

and afterwards, *I am that I am, I am the Lord Jehovah.* We find that this Angel went before his people in a cloud: and afterwards, repreſenting the perſon of almighty God, and ſpeaking in his name, he ſays, *Behold, I ſend my Angel before thee--- beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your tranſgreſſions; for my name is in him.*

Concerning this Angel *Jacob* thus ſpeaks, when he bleſſes the children of *Joſeph*: *The God who fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bleſs the lads.* And *Moſes* bleſſing the poſterity of *Joſeph*, prays that they may enjoy the favour *of him*, of the Angel, *who dwelt in the buſh.*

Concerning this Angel *Zechariah* thus ſpeaks, xii. 8. *In that day ſhall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and he that is feeble among them at that day ſhall be as David; and the houſe of David ſhall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them.* The ſentence riſes in ſuch a manner, that it cannot be ſuppoſed to ſink at laſt; whence it is reaſonable to conclude that the ſame perſon is here called God, and the Angel of the Lord.

Laſtly, Concerning the ſame Angel *Malachi* ſays, *The Lord whom ye ſeek ſhall ſuddenly come to his temple, even the Angel,* or meſſenger, *of the covenant.*

This mighty Angel, the ſaviour, redeemer, interceſſor, and protector, ſeems to be no common or created Angel, but that Angel in whom the name of God was, and by whom God ſpeaks to mankind, and who on that account is called the Word of God, who was in the beginning with God, and who was God, by whom all things were created, and who afterwards became man and dwelt with us.

The *Jews* had many prejudices againſt the perſon of Chriſt; they had as many, or rather more, againſt his doctrine.

The religion of the Goſpel is ſpiritual: the religion of the *Jews*, as they made it, was carnal. The Goſpel places morality above rites and ceremonies: the *Jews* preferred, in their practice at leaſt, the ritual law to the moral.

The Goſpel repreſents the law of ceremonies as a temporary inſtitution, which drew towards its end after the coming of *John* the *Baptiſt*: the *Jews* thought that the whole Law was everlaſting, and of perpetual obligation. They believed that they could perform as much of it as would be ſufficient to ſecure the favour of God; they therefore rejected new doctrines and means of ſalvation as falſe, or uſeleſs and unneceſſary.

Of all their miſtakes and prejudices, their too great zeal for the Law ſeems to have been the moſt excuſable. It aroſe partly from a high veneration for commandments, which were undoubtedly of divine appointment, and a good man might have fallen into it. Therefore the Apoſtles uſed great lenity and condeſcenſion towards the *Jews* in this particular, and ſuffered them to obſerve the ritual law along with the Goſpel, which they did for a conſiderable time, till, *Jeruſalem* being deſtroyed, no ſmall part of the ceremonial law became impracticable, and by ſlow * degrees the whole fell into diſuſe.

---

* *Sulpitius Severus* L. ii. *Euſebius* E. H. iv. 6. *Origen* contr. *Celſ.* ii. p. 56.

The *Jews* accounted *Moſes* to have been the greateſt of all the prophets: the Goſpel taught them that *John* the *Baptiſt* was a prophet greater than all who had been before him, yet in every reſpect infinitely inferior to Chriſt, and not equal to the leaſt of Chriſt's diſciples in dignity of office.

The *Jews* not only avoided, as much as they could, all intercourſe with the *Gentiles*, which indeed their own Law required of them in many caſes, but had them generally in abomination, not for their vices, but becauſe they obſerved not the law of *Moſes*: the Goſpel commanded them to love all men, though they were not *Jews* either by birth or by religion, and not to ſhun them as unfit for converſation, unleſs they were ſcandalous by impiety or immorality.

The Goſpel condemned, not only evil actions, but evil inclinations and thoughts: the * *Jews*, if we may judge of them by the ſentiments of ſome of their own writers, were of opinion that there was no harm in bad deſigns, unleſs they were put in execution.

---

* *Joſephus* ſays that *Antiochus Epiphanes*, as he was dying, confeſſed that he ſuffered for the injuries which he had done to the *Jews*. Then he adds, I wonder how *Polybius* could ſay that *Antiochus* periſhed, becauſe he had purpoſed to

The

---

to plunder the temple of *Diana* in *Perſia*; for to intend the thing only, and not to perform it, is not worthy of puniſhment: ὥςε θαυμάζειν Πολύβιον τὸν Μεγαλοπολίτην, ὃς, ἀγαθὸς ὢν ἀνὴρ, ἀποθανεῖν λέγει τὸν Ἀντίοχον, βουληθέντα τὸ τῆς ἐν Πέρσαις Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν συλῆσαι. τὸ γὰρ μηκέτι ποιῆσαι τὸ ἔργον βουλευσάμενον, οὐκ ἐςὶ τιμωρίας ἄξιον.——*Ant*. xii. 9.

See *Selden* de *Synedr*. ii. 13. §. 7. *Hammond* on *Rom*. vii. 7. *Grævius* on *Cicero* de Offic. i. 4. and *Grotius* on *Exod*. xx. 17. who obſerves that the wiſer Pagans had much better notions. The ſtory of *Glaucus* is remarkable, who being eſteemed a man of ſingular probity, and having a large ſum of money depoſited in his hands; and an opportunity of keeping it from the owners, if he would forſwear himſelf, conſulted the Oracle at *Delphi* what he ſhould do; ἐπειρωτῶντα δὲ αὐτὸν τὸ χρηςήριον εἰ ὅρκῳ τὰ χρήματα ληΐσεται, ἡ Πυθίη μετέρχεται τοῖσδε τοῖσι ἔπεσι·

Γλαῦκ' Ἐπικυδείδη, τὸ μὲν αὐτίκα κέρδιον οὕτω,
Ὅρκῳ νικῆσαι, καὶ χρήματα ληΐσασθαι·
Ὄμνυ· ἐπεὶ θάνατός γε καὶ ἔυορκον μένει ἄνδρα.
Ἀλλ' ὅρκου παῖς ἐςὶν ἀνώνυμος, οὐδ' ἔπι χεῖρες,
Οὐδὲ πόδες· κραιπνὸς δὲ μετέρχεται, εἰσόκε πᾶσαν
Συμμάρψας ὀλέσῃ γενεὴν, καὶ οἶκον ἅπαντα·
Ἀνδρὸς δ' εὐόρκου γενεὴ μετόπισθεν ἀμείνων.

Ταῦτα ἀκούσας ὁ Γλαῦκος συγγνώμην τὸν Θεὸν παραιτέετο αὐτῶ ἴσχειν τῶν ῥηθέντων· ἡ δὲ Πυθίη ἔφη, Τὸ πειρηθῆναι τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ τὸ ποιῆσαι, ἴσον δύναται. Γλαῦκος μὲν δὴ μεταπεμψάμενος τοὺς Μιλησίους ξείνους, ἀποδιδοῖ σφι τὰ χρήματα.——Γλαύκου νῦν οὔτε τι ἀπόγονόν ἐςι οὐδὲν, οὔτ' ἐςίη

οὐδεμίη

The Goſpel required purity of heart: the *Jews* had ſlight notions of this duty, and placed purity in bodily and ritual purifications.

The

οὐδεμίη νομιζομένη εἶναι Γλαύκου· ἐκτέτριπταί τε πρόῤῥιζος ἐκ Σπάρτης.

When he had propoſed his queſtion, the Prieſteſs of Apollo *anſwered thus:*

If preſent profit claim thy chief regard,
Be bold, and ſwear, and take the obvious prize.
Juſt dealing cannot ſave thee from the grave.
But the oath's Guardian has a nameleſs Son,
Who ſwift and ſtrong, though without hand or foot,
Purſues, o'ertakes, and ſeizes, and deſtroys
The whole devoted race; whilſt honeſt men
Leave laſting bleſſings to their children's children.

Glaucus *hearing this, intreated the god to forgive him what he had ſaid. The Prieſteſs reply'd; To tempt the god, and to commit the action, is all one.* Glaucus *however ſent to recall his* Mileſian *gueſts, and deliver'd them the money.—At preſent there remains no houſe or progeny of* Glaucus, *but it is rooted out from* Sparta. Herodot. vi. p. 359. *Ed. Gron.* See the ſame ſtory related by *Juvenal* xiii. 199. *Cicero* de Offic. iii. 8. ſeems to allude to it.

Compare the words of the Oracle, concerning the Son of the Deity who preſides over oaths, with *Zechar.* v. 1.——*I looked, and behold, a flying roll.—Then ſaid he unto me, This is the curſe that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth,—and it ſhall enter into the houſe of the thief, and into the houſe of him that ſweareth falſly by my name: and it ſhall remain in the midſt of his houſe; and ſhall conſume it, with the timber thereof, and the ſtones thereof.* The likeneſs between theſe two places is obſerved by *Grotius.*

The Goſpel promiſed eternal happineſs to thoſe who would lead religious lives, and to impenitent ſinners denounced the moſt dreadful puniſhments: the *Jews* thought that no *Iſraelite* ſhould be deprived of future happineſs, whatſoever his faults had been,* unleſs he were guilty of apoſtaſy, idolatry,

---

The laſt verſe of the Oracle is to be found in *Heſiod* Ἔργ. 285. and the ſenſe, though not the words, of the foregoing lines, 282, &c.

Maimonides indeed, and ſome others, learn'd to talk in a better manner on this ſubject, and more conformably to Chriſtian morality. See *Huet.* Alnet. Quæſt. p. 343.

But though evil intentions are faults, yet, as to human laws, *Ulpian*'s determination ſeems, generally ſpeaking, to be juſt: *Cogitationis pœnam nemo patitur.* Digeſt. L. xlviii. Tit. xix. 18. Where ſee the Notes.

* Ὑπολαμβάνοντες ὅτι πάντως τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς σπορᾶς τῆς κατὰ σάρκα τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ οὖσι, κἂν ἁμαρτωλοὶ ὦσι καὶ ἄπιστοι καὶ ἀπειθεῖς πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, ἡ βασιλεία ἡ αἰώνιος δοθήσεται. exiſtimantes eis omnino qui ex ſatu, ſecundum carnem, Abrahami ſunt, quamvis peccatoribus, et infidelibus, et erga Deum immorigeris, regnum æternum datum iri. *Juſtin M.* Dial. 433. Ed. Thirl.

The School of *Elias* uſed to ſay, that whoſoever learned the Traditions of the Miſnah might be aſſured he ſhould have eternal life. See *Grotius* on *Mat.* x. 28. xiv. 2. *James* ii. 14. *Whitb.* on *Acts* i. 25. *Rom.* ii. 13. *James* ii. 11. and p. 466, 467. vol. 2. of 6th Edit.

Perhaps they did not carry this notion ſo far as to affirm that their wicked country-men ſhould receive no correction in idolatry, and a few other crimes which they ſpecified.

The Goſpel gave the *Jews* no hopes that they ſhould ſubdue their enemies, and become a free and independent nation: the *Jews* were very * factious and ſeditious, and had an intemperate love of liberty, at a time

---

in a future ſtate, but probably they thought that God, who in their opinion was a reſpecter of perſons, would be gracious to theſe unworthy children of *Abraham*, that their puniſhment ſhould laſt a certain time, and that then they ſhould enter into a ſtate of happineſs, which favour ſhould not be extended to the *Gentiles*, for whom God had no regard. See *Le Clerc.* Quæſt. Hieron. p. 287. *Whitb.* on *Acts* xi. 18. xv. 1. *Rom.* ii. 13. 1 *Cor.* i. 28. 2 *Cor.* xi. 20. *Huet.* Alnet. Quæſt. p. 297. *Windet.* de Vitâ funct. ſtatu. p. 70. 4to. Ed. *Sale*'s notes on the *Coran*. p. 11.

Many *Mohammedan* doctors are much in the ſame way of thinking, and teach that believers ſhall all enter into a ſtate of happineſs after the reſurrection, ſome immediately, others after certain puniſhments, but that infidels ſhall be conſigned over to eternal miſery. See *Reland.* de Relig. Mohammed. and *Sale*'s *Coran*, prelim. diſc. p. 92.

* Their turbulent temper may be known from the *Jus Zelotarum*, or privilege, under the pretence of zeal, to diſpatch an offender without the tedious formality of a trial; concerning which licentiouſneſs *Philo* ſays, injudiciouſly enough; Καὶ ἐπιτετράφθαι δὲ καλὸν ἅπασι τοῖς ζῆλον ἔχουσιν ἀρετῆς, ἐκ χειρὸς ἀναπράττειν ἀνυπερθέτως τὰς τιμωρίας, μήτ᾽ εἰς δικαστήριον, μήτ᾽ εἰς βουλευτήριον, μήτε συνόλως ἐπ᾽ ἀρχὴν ἄγοντας, ἀλλὰ τῷ παραστάντι μισοπονήρῳ

a time and in circumſtances when it was not to be obtained.

νήρῳ πάθει καὶ φιλοθέῳ καταχρῆσθαι πρὸς τὰς τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἀπαραιτήτους κολάσεις, νομίσαντας αὐτοὺς ὑπὸ τοῦ καιροῦ τὰ πάντα γεγενῆσθαι, βουλευτὰς, δικαστὰς, στρατηγοὺς, ἐκκλησιαστὰς, κατηγόρους, μάρτυρας, νόμους, δῆμον, ἵνα μηδενὸς ὄντος ἐμποδὼν, ἄφοβοι συνόδῳ πολλῇ προαγωνίζωνται ὁσιότητος.

This alſo is right, that all who have a zeal for virtue are allowed to execute rigorous puniſhments without delay, neither carrying the offender to the courts of judicature, nor to any magiſtrate, but indulging that ardour which the hatred of iniquity and the love of God excites, to the end that the impious may never eſcape vengeance, and acccounting themſelves, by the exigence of the time, to be made all things, ſenators, judges, generals, aſſemblies, accuſers, witneſſes, laws and people, that ſo nothing may hinder them from exerting themſelves boldly and jointly for righteouſneſs. *De Monarch.* I. p. 818. *Ed. Pariſ.* 1640.

The love of God and of virtue and of truth is no ſuch turbulent and boiſterous paſſion, and pious zeal may be active and yet not pernicious, and ſhine without burning. Intemperate Zeal is like *Sirius* in *Homer:*

> *Λαμπρότατος μὲν ὅγ᾽ ἐστὶ, κακὸν δέ τε σῆμα τέτυκται,*
> *Καί τε φέρει πολλὸν πυρετὸν δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι.*
>
> Ille quidem clarâ, ſed ſævâ luce coruſcat,
> Et morbos æſtuſque adfert mortalibus ægris.
>
> IL. x. 30.

Pious Zeal is like the *gentle Flame* in *Virgil:*

> Ecce levis ſubito de vertice viſus Iüli
> Fundere lumen apex, tactuque innoxia mollis
> Lambere flamma comas, et circum tempora paſci.
>
> ÆN. ii.

The Goſpel called the *Jews* to ſufferings and perſecution, and had at that time a very unpromiſing aſpect as to this world. A converted *Jew* could expect nothing beſides ill uſage from his country-men, who were very zealous for their religion: and if he were the only one of his family who received Chriſtianity, he might be ſure that his worſt enemies would be his neareſt relations, and his moſt inveterate foes thoſe of his own houſhold. It required no ſmall virtue and reſolution to offer up ſuch a ſacrifice to God, to forſake houſe and land, friends and kindred, father and mother, wife and children, for the ſake of Chriſt.

The *Jews* were accuſtomed to [*] indulge themſelves without reſtraint in thoſe things which the Law allowed for the hardneſs of their hearts: here the Goſpel interpoſed with ſtrict prohibitions, repreſenting the cuſtom of divorce and of marrying again, as it was practiſed by them, as no better than adultery. The Apoſtles themſelves thought this, when they firſt heard it, to be a hard precept; and indeed, [†] in all parts of the world where theſe practices have been eſtabliſhed, nothing has ſtopped the progreſs of Chriſtianity more than the prohibition of * polygamy and divorce, and many, who elſe ſeemed diſpoſed to receive the Goſpel, have rejected it upon this only account.

---

[*] *Whitby* on *John* viii. 7.

[†] *Bayle* Dict. MAHOMET GALADIN. & *Parrhaſiana*, ch. 7.

Laſtly, the *Jews* thought that the Chriſtian † morality was in general too ſtrict and ſevere, and that no man could poſſibly practiſe it.

---

* Chriſt and the Apoſtles have not perhaps directly, and in ſo many words, prohibited polygamy; but from the reaſoning of Chriſt againſt divorce, Chriſtians have juſtly concluded polygamy to be unlawful. Of the evils ariſing from both, ſee *Le Clerc* Hiſt. Eccleſ. Proleg. p. 113. 161.

Polygamy was forbidden by the Roman laws. *Digeſt.* L. iii. *Tit.* ii. 1. *Cod.* L. ix. *Tit.* ix. 18. And afterwards, Chriſtian Emperors would not permit it to any perſons in their dominions. *Cod.* L. i. *Tit.* ix. 7. L. v. *Tit.* v. 2. *Novell.* xviii. 5. In what caſes they allowed divorce, may be ſeen *Cod.* L. v. *Tit.* xvii. *Novell.* xxii. 15. cxvii. 8. 9. cxl. Moreover; *Eo tempore, quo quis uxorem habet, concubinam habere non poteſt.* Julius Paulus *Recept. Sentent.* L. ii. *Tit.* xx. Et *Cod.* L. v. *Tit,* xxvi. Et *Leonis Conſtit.* xci.

† *Trypho* ſays to *Juſtin,* ὑμῶν δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ λεγομένῳ εὐαγγελίῳ παραγγέλματα θαυμαστὰ οὕτως καὶ μεγάλα ἐπίσαμαι εἶναι, ὡς ὑπολαμβάνειν μηδένα δύνασθαι φυλάξαι αὐτά. Veſtra ſane quæ in evangelio, quod dicitur, ſunt præcepta tam magna et admiranda eſſe novimus, ut ſuſpicio noſtra ſit a nemine ea ſervari poſſe.

So alſo ſays *Orobius* in his diſpute with *Limborch.*

See *Tillotſon* Vol. I. Serm. 28. The *Jews* taught that a careful obſervance of ſome laws would excuſe the violation of the reſt. See *Whitby* on *James* ii. 11.

The chief prieſts, Scribes and Phariſees, beſides all theſe prejudices already mentioned, had particular motives to reject the Goſpel.

They hated Chriſt, becauſe he had reproved and openly expoſed their pride, their hypocriſy, their uncharitableneſs, their covetouſneſs, *their zeal for traditions*; and their hatred againſt him diſpoſed them to think ill of him, and to do him all ill offices. We need not wonder when we find them upon all occaſions oppoſing and calumniating him, if we conſider that they were a wicked ſet of men, and that he had publicly and frequently reproved them. They were highly incenſed againſt him, and in the judgment which they made of him, they were directed by their paſſions, not by their reaſon.

Nor did anger and reſentment only furniſh them with prejudices againſt Chriſt, but ſelf-intereſt alſo and worldly policy. The people, who had ſeen the miracles of Chriſt, particularly that miracle by which he had fed a great multitude, had at one time, as St. *John* relates, a deſign to make him their king, concluding reaſonably enough that under ſuch a leader they ſhould be victorious. Therefore Chriſt, if he had been a deceiver, and had entertained ambitious deſigns, might eaſily have made himſelf a prince, and might have incited the people to ſhake off the *Roman* yoke, which was grievous to them.

The chief prieſts and principal perſons amongſt the *Jews* thought, that if Chriſt ſhould make ſuch an attempt they ſhould be ruined, whatſoever the conſequence of it were. If the *Jews* under his conduct ſhould endeavour to recover their liberties, and fail in it, they knew that the nation would be ſeverely puniſhed by the *Romans*. Nor was their proſpect leſs bad, if Chriſt ſhould deliver the people from their ſubjection to a foreign power, and rule over them himſelf; for though they hated the *Romans*, yet doubtleſs they thought that Chriſt would be a worſe ruler for them than any *Roman* governor. They knew that he had a bad opinion of them, and that he had expoſed their vices, and therefore they concluded that the eſtabliſhment of his authority would be the ruin of theirs. Thus were they incited not only by reſentment, but, as they fancied, by intereſt, to deny that Chriſt was the *Meſſias*, to oppoſe him, and to deſtroy him; for ſince they were perſuaded that the *Meſſias* ſhould be a temporal king, they could not acknowledge Chriſt to be the *Meſſias*, unleſs at the ſame time they owned him to be their king.

They ſucceeded in their endeavours, they ſtirred up the people, they intimidated the governor, they prevailed to have Chriſt crucified, and by his death they thought themſelves at laſt ſecure from all theſe evils. But he aroſe again, and his diſciples appeared openly in *Jeruſalem*, working miracles, and teaching that Jeſus was the *Meſſias*. One would at firſt think that no man could withſtand ſuch evidence; but we ſhall not ſo much wonder at their obſtinacy, if we obſerve that their fears, and, as they thought, their intereſts led them again to oppoſe the truth.

They conſidered that they were the perſons who had repreſented Chriſt as a madman, an impoſtor, a magician, a violator of the law; who had inſtigated the people and who had perſuaded *Pilate* to crucify him; they heard that the Apoſtles wrought miracles in the name of Chriſt, and they concluded that if the Apoſtles were permitted to proceed in this manner, they would convert a great part of the *Jews*, and they feared that if the doctrines taught by Chriſt's diſciples were received, they who had been his implacable enemies ſhould be accounted not only ignorant and blind guides, but diſhoneſt men; that they ſhould not only loſe their credit and authority, but be expoſed to the reſentment of the incenſed multitude; and therefore they thought that the beſt way to ſecure themſelves was to deter and hinder the Apoſtles from appearing any more in public, and from preaching the Goſpel. And when the diſciples continued to perform the functions of their miniſtry, the high prieſt aſked them, ſaying, *Did we not ſtraightly command you that you ſhould not teach in this name? And behold, ye have filled Jeruſalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.*

Miracles were wrought to convince them; but when a man is violently bent to believe or diſbelieve, he is more than half perſuaded that things are as he deſires. They haſtily concluded that thoſe miracles were either deluſions and impoſtures, or wonderful works performed by the aid of evil ſpirits.

From theſe ill diſpoſitions proceeded ſuitable effects; for they perſecuted the firſt Chriſtians, they accuſed them to the Roman magiſtrates of ſedition, they beat them in their ſynagogues, they impriſoned them, they baniſhed them, they put many of them to death, and ſtrove to the utmoſt of their power to deſtroy this riſing ſect. Some * ancient writers aſſure us, that the *Jews* took the pains to ſend perſons from *Jeruſalem* into all countries, to accuſe the Chriſtians of atheiſm and other crimes, and to make them as odious as they poſſibly could.

From the account which we have given of the obſtinacy of the *Jews*, and of the cauſes whence it aroſe, it appears that their unbelief is no objection to the truth of the Goſpel. The modern *Jews* therefore reaſon weakly when they ſay, that their anceſtors would not, and could not have rejected Chriſt, if the miracles related in the Goſpel had been really wrought. Againſt this argument we may alſo obſerve, that it can do no ſervice to a *Jew*, becauſe it would prove too much. It would prove that *Moſes* wrought no miracles, ſince the whole people of *Iſraël* often rebelled againſt him: it would prove that many of the prophets recorded in the Old Teſtament were falſe prophets, becauſe they were perſecuted by the *Jews*. The *Jews* are not able to give any reaſon * why they acknowledge the

---

* *Juſtin M.* and *Euſebius*. See *Juſtin* p. 171. and *Thirlby*'s Notes, and *Fabricius* de Ver. R. C. p. 665.

---

* This argument is uſed by *Origen* contr. *Celſ.* I. p. 32. and frequently through the whole treatiſe. *Orobius*, being preſs'd with it by *Limborch*, was forced to make two aukward conceſſions; firſt, that a *Jew* could not prove his religion to a Deiſt; and ſecondly, that it became every Chriſtian and *Jew* to continue in the religion in which he had been educated; becauſe each had arguments to urge which the other could not confute. See *Limborch*'s Colla[illegible] & *Le Clerc* Bibl. Choiſ. xxiv. p. 359. The heretic *Apel*[illegible] [illegible]d much the ſame thing, namely, *μὴ δεῖν ὅλως ἐξετάζειν* [illegible] *λόγον, ἀλλ᾽ ἕκαστον ὡς πεπιστευκὼς διαμένειν.* *Euſebius* E H. v. 13.

Law of [illegible] to be a divine revelation, which [illegible] not directly and more ſtrongly eſtabliſ[illegible] truth and authority of the Goſpel.

The GENTILES had many prejudices in common with the *Jews*, and ſome peculiar to themſelves.

The cauſes of unbelief which were common to them with the *Jews* were, a great corruption of manners, the prejudice of education, the *purity of the precepts of the* Goſpel ſo oppoſite to their vitious inclinations, the temporal inconveniences which attended the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and the temporal advantages which might be ſecured or obtained by rejecting or oppoſing it, the poor appearance which Chriſt had made in the world, and his ignominious death, which they could not reconcile with the divine power aſcribed to him by his diſciples; theſe things produced in the greater part of the *Jews* an averſion to the Goſpel, and they had the ſame effect on the unc[illegible]rted *Gentiles*.

The *Gentiles* ought not to have ſlighted and rejected the Goſpel upon account of the low eſtate and ſufferings of Chriſt and his

Apoſtles.

Apoſtles. * Their own reaſon, and ſome of their moſt approved writers [illegible] have taught them not to value perſo[illegible]ording to their greatneſs and riches, nor to meaſure the favour of God by temporal happineſs, but to love and honour oppreſs'd innocence.

They might have remembred that the beſt man and the wiſeſt philoſopher recorded in their hiſtories, lived all his days in † poverty, was expoſed to ſlander and calumny, and at laſt was accuſed by falſe witneſſes, and condemned to die by unjuſt judges.

They knew that Virtue often obtains not the eſteem and reſpect which it deſerves, that it often lies concealed from the world, or,

---

* Omnes adeo veſtri viri fortes, quos in exemplum prædicatis, ærumnis ſuis inclyti floruerunt. *Minuc. Felix*. 36.

† *ἐγὼ μὲν οἶμαι, ἔφη ὁ Σωκράτης, εἰ ἀγαθοῦ ὠνητοῦ ἐπιτύχοιμι, εὑρεῖν ἄν μοι σὺν τῇ οἰκίᾳ καὶ τὰ ὄντα πάντα πάνυ ῥᾳδίως πέντε μνᾶς.* I believe, ſaid *Socrates*, that, if I ſhould meet with a good purchaſer, my effects, houſe and all would eaſily fetch me ſixteen pounds.

Xenoph. Oecono[illegible] 3.

Socrates, amicis audientibus: Emiſſem, inquit, pallium, ſi nummos haberem, &c. *Seneca* de Benef. VII. 24.

In *Plato*'s Apol. Socrat. he ſays that he is *in extreme poverty, ἐν πενίᾳ μυρίᾳ εἰμί.*

[illegible], being placed in view, is yet not obſerved, and that poſterity frequently does juſtice to the characters * of illuſtrious perſons whoſe good qualities have been overlooked by thoſe amongſt whom they dwelt.

They knew that Virtue, though it be ſo amiable in itſelf, has a luſtre offenſive to the vitious, that therefore Pride, and Ignorance, and Envy, and Malice, and Cenſoriouſneſs will join to obſcure and *miſrepreſent it*, will endeavour to make it contemptible, and to bring it to a level with themſelves.

They knew that he beſt deſerved the name of a wiſe and good man, who lived up to the rules of morality which he had preſcribed to others; and they ought to have admired a man who at the ſame time that he recommended to his followers humility, patience and reſignation to the will of God under the ſevereſt trials, forgiveneſs of injuries, and univerſal love and charity, practiſed theſe duties himſelf in their full extent, and was a perfect example of all that he taught.

---

* Quamdiu Catonem civitas ignoravit? reſpuit, nec intellexit, niſi cum perdidit. *Seneca.*

The *Gentiles* could not conceive how one who ſeemed hated and forſaken of God ſhould reſtore men to the favour of God, and how his ſufferings could be ſerviceable to that end.

It is reaſonable that the Divine mercy ſhould conſtantly diſplay itſelf in all caſes which lie within the reach of compaſſion. Such was the caſe of us men, who though ſinful, yet are weak and frail beings, though offenders, yet corrigible and capable of amendment.

But it is alſo reaſonable that God ſhould be diſpleaſed at the rebellion and tranſgreſſions of his creatures, that he ſhould ſhew his diſapprobation of iniquity, and ſo grant his pardon, as at the ſame time to vindicate the honour of his government and of his laws, Now this he has accompliſhed in a moſt illuſtrious manner in the death of his Son, thereby ſhewing his hatred to ſin in keeping ſinners at a diſtance, and refuſing to hear them in their own name, and in beſtowing his favours only through the mediation of one, who *ſuffered for* *their offences, and roſe again for their juſtification.**

It is farther reaſonable that even this Interceſſor ſhould not interpoſe in our behalf, if

---

* *Petrus* I. II. 19. vult nos patientes eſſe in tolerandis afflictionibus, quas inſontes patimur. Adfert Chriſti exemplum: *qui*, inquit, *et ipſe paſſus eſt*. Satis hoc erat ad comparationem: ſed addidit, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, quod ad comparationem non pertinet, ſed rem ipſam, hoc eſt, Chriſti paſſionem clarè deſignat. Commune ergo eſt patientia; modus ille differt. Alioqui fruſtra Paulus quæreret, an Paulus pro fidelibus eſſet crucifixus, *Cor*. I. I. 13. Poterat enim et ipſe pro Eccleſiâ, hoc eſt, in uſum Eccleſiæ crucifigi, ſicut pati ſe dixit pro Eccleſiâ, *Col.* I. 24. et poſtea magno Eccleſiæ bono ipſe gladio percuſſus eſt, Petrus, aliique Apoſtoli crucifixi. Sed eo modo, quo Chriſtus, crucifigi, pœnas vice noſtrâ ferendo, nec Paulus poterat, nec alius quiſquam. Vox ergo illa ὑπὲρ *pro*, peculiare hic aliquid denotat, quod Apoſtolis communicari non poteſt. Poſſet autem, ſi mortis Chriſti utilitas gradu tantùm a morte Apoſtolorum, non etiam fine proprio ſegregaretur. *Grotius* de *Satisf.* cap. 9. p. 331.

Joan. I. 29. ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ—— Reſpicit Baptiſta non ad agnum mactatum, gratiarum agendarum cauſſâ, qualis erat agnus Paſchalis, ſed ad agnum expiandi peccati cauſſâ oblatum, quales erant agni holocautomatis quotidiani. Joannes ergo comparat id quod facturus erat Jeſus ad homines ad ſanctitatem adducendos, cum Deo reconciliandos, liberandosque pœnis quas erant commeriti, ritui qui adhibebatur, quando Deo victima pro peccato offerebatur. Tum verò quiſquis ſacra faciebat, ritu ipſo ſacrificii palam fatebatur ſe commeritum eſſe mortem, quam victima modò paſſa erat, ſeque moriturum, ſi Deus ſummo jure ſecum agere

if we prefer vice to virtue, and therefore the Goſpel has taught us that Chriſt's death ſhall be no attonement for us, nor his reſurrection of any benefit to us, unleſs we uſe our beſt endeavours to die to ſin and to live to God.

An example of goodneſs ſet before us for our imitation, encouragement to practiſe the virtues which are moſt conſpicuous in adverſity, which at the ſame time adorn it and ſoften its harſh nature, reliance upon him who underwent ſo much for our ſake, hope that he will be a merciful judge, motives from gratitude to love him more than our ſins who loved us more than his own life, the fears of departing hence conſiderably aſſuaged, theſe are benefits ariſing from the ſufferings of our Maſter, and uſeful purpoſes

---

agere vellet: Deus verò viciſſim accipiebat ſanguinem victimæ loco ſanguinis peccatoris, et ſibi confeſſione rei ac pœnitentiâ ſatisfieri patiebatur Similiter cùm Chriſtus ſemet ipſe Deo obtulit, humani generis loco ſeſe ei ſtitit, at Deus accepit mortem ejus loco pœnarum, quas ſinguli peccatores luere debuiſſent, vultque eas ei condonare, eâ lege ut [illegible]li, qui Chriſto credent et parebunt, fructuum ſacrificii ej[illegible]ticipes fiant. Sic nobis deſcribitur in Scripturâ ſacrifici[illegible] Chriſti, nec ab eâ deſcriptione abire liceat, niſi velimus aliter loqui, quam fecere Apoſtoli. *Clericus.*

which ſeem to be better anſwer'd by this method of our redemption, than they would have been if Chriſt had deſcended from heaven to proclaim forgiveneſs of ſins upon repentance, and to teach men their duty, and then had left the world without undergoing the evils to which he ſubmitted.

The *Gentiles* thought it ſtrange to aſcribe ſuch power and authority to a crucified man.

But, the greateſt power which any perſon can ſhew, conſiſts unqueſtionably in performing things which no other can do, unleſs God aſſiſt him in an extraordinary manner. To deſtroy the peace of mankind, and carry ruin and deſolation through populous countries, is no more than what human ſtrength and human policy can accompliſh. Many have done this who have not poſſeſs'd one commendable quality. To be honoured, admired, truſted, reverenced, and beloved, theſe are advantages which may be obtained without any ſupernatural aid. But, as the *Pſalmiſt* obſerves, no man by the multitude of his riches, or the eminence of his ſtation, can deliver his brother, or himſelf from death, or make agreement unto

God for him. For it coſt more to redeem their ſouls, ſo that he muſt let that alone for ever. Therefore he who can heal all ſickneſſes and diſeaſes by ſpeaking a word, who can reſtore the dead to life, who can confer the ſame power upon others, who can deliver himſelf from the grave, is as much ſuperior to the rich, the rulers, and the heroes of this world, as the heavens are above the earth.

If he had appeared in power and ſplendor, if he had ſubdued vice by force of arms, and eſtabliſhed his kingdom upon earth, and ruled over the willing nations, giving them juſt and holy laws, and taking innocence and virtue under his protection, ſuch an enterprize, ſo accompliſhed, had indeed been great and glorious; but as in this caſe the means would have been proportionate to the end, it would have been nothing when compared with the deliverance which he wrought, and the victories which he gained, not by human means, nor by worldly wiſdom, but by a moſt wonderful and unparallell'd methed, by ſubmitting to poverty and contempt, by avoiding honours, by ſuffering indignities, by dying upon the croſs, by ſending out a few ignorant and obſcure men, who with no other arms than patience and meekneſs, and with no other art than ſpeaking the truth, though oppoſed by the learned and the mighty, introduced a religion which ſpread itſelf through the world.

The national religion of the Heathen, and their idolatrous worſhip, as eſtabliſhed by their laws and cuſtoms, and received by the vulgar, was ſo ſtrange, abſurd and inconſiſtent, beſides its variety in different countries, that it is not eaſy to give an account of it. But briefly, and in general, it ſeems to have been founded on theſe ſuppoſitions:

That there were many Gods, one of whom was ſuperior to the reſt;

That they were all concerned in the government of the world, and could do good or hurt to men, as they were diſpoſed;

That they were far ſuperior to men in power and knowledge, as alſo that they were immortal, but that elſe * they had like paſſions with men, were capricious, revengeful, and eaſily provoked;

---

* The inferior deities.

That they only expected to have magnificent temples built for them, adorned with rich gifts, ſtatues erected and ſacrifices offered to them,* hymns ſung in their praiſe, perſons dedicated to their ſervice, feaſts and ſolemnities kept in honour of them, that whoſoever paid them ſuch outward reſpect was religious, ſo that religion and virtue were two things. Add to this † that ſome ſolemn rites conſiſted in cruel, impure, or indecent actions.

---

* Pulchre obſervat *Sam. Pufendorfius* Introd. ad Hiſtor. *Part.* I. c. 12. § 2. apud Ethnicos veteres nullas fuiſſe ſacras conciones ſive publicos cœtus, in quibus populus de religione ſua inſtitueretur, et de virtute ac pietate colenda admoneretur: ſed maximam partem cultus Deorum conſtitiſſe ſacrificiis cerimoniiſque et dierum feſtorum ſolennitate; quæ tamen ludis potius et luxu quam divinarum rerum contemplatione et pietatis exercitatione, obibatur. Ita ut ex ejuſmodi religione Ethnica neque per vitam erudiri homo in cognitione Numinis, neque inflammari ad pietatem; neque in morte ſolatium ac ſpem de meliore vita concipere poſſet. Quo magis agnoſcenda eſt noſtra Chriſtianorum felicitas, &c. *Fabricius*, Bibliogr. Antiq. p. 379. The Emperor *Julian* was ſenſible of this defect in Paganiſm, and intended to redreſs it, as I obſerve in another place.

† *Juſtin* xxi. 3. *Euſebius* de Vit. Conſt. III. 55, 58. Orat. de Laud. Conſt. 9. 13. *Socrates* Hiſt. Eccl. III. 2. *Clemens Alex.* Cohort. iii. p. 36. Edit. *Pott.* *Le Clerc* on Exod. xxxiv. 15. *Whitby* on Epheſ. v. 4.

The *Gentiles*, though they had for the moſt part mean and falſe notions of religion, were more wicked than ignorant. We need not appeal to the teſtimony of the firſt Chriſtians and to the Epiſtles of St. *Paul* for the truth of this: The Heathen writers, their poets, philoſophers, and hiſtorians have left ſad * deſcriptions or ſcandalous proofs of the extreme corruption of the age in which they lived. Such a degeneracy amongſt the *Gentiles* would probably produce in them an averſion to a pure and holy religion, and to the diſagreeable truths which oppoſed their favourite inclinations, and a diſlike to thoſe troubleſome reformers who undertook to ſhew them the neceſſity of breaking off their bad courſes.

The philoſophers and other learned Pagans ſcorned, no leſs than the *Jewiſh* teachers, to be inſtructed by poor and obſcure and illiterate men; and as the *Jews* objected that none of their rulers believed in Chriſt, ſo the *Gentiles* obſerved with great contempt, that the firſt proſelytes to Chriſtianity were chiefly of the lower ſort.

---

* *Seneca* de Benef. I. 9.

The philoſophers and the more learned amongſt the *Gentiles* might be ranked under three ſorts:

Such as worſhipped one ſupreme God, and many inferior who under him governed the world;

Such as thought that there was no knowledge and certainty;

Such as believed no God, or no providence.

Their pride and high opinion of themſelves would not ſuffer them to condeſcend to be taught by men of no reading and learning, and their firm adherence to their ſeveral ſects, for which they were remarkable, made them obſtinate in reſiſting the beſt arguments. There were in particular two or three notions much prevailing amongſt them, which increaſed their prejudices againſt the Goſpel:

Firſt, that the learned might think as they would, and diſpute as much as they thought fit, but that they ought to conform to the religion of their country, and keep it up, as it was delivered to them by their anceſtors;

Secondly, that [*] God did not require that all nations ſhould be of the ſame religion, but was well pleaſed with the variety of worſhip which obtained in different places, according to the different notions which men had of the divine nature;

Thirdly, [†] which ſeems to be a conſequence of the two opinions before mentioned, that religion or piety towards the Gods, as it is diſtinguiſhed from morality, was a thing of ſmall moment in itſelf, and to be obſerved for reaſons of ſtate and for political purpoſes. [‡]

---

[*] *Socrates* Hiſt. Eccl. iv. 32. *Themiſt.* Orat. 7. ad *Valent.* *Symmach.* apud *Prudent.* ii. 773.

[†] *Seneca* ſays, concerning the religion of his country: *Quæ omnia ſapiens ſervabit, tanquam legibus juſſa, non tanquam Diis grata.* And —— *Omnem iſtam ignobilem deorum turbam, quam longo ævo, longa ſuperſtitio congeſſit, ſic adorabimus, ut meminerimus cultum ejus magis ad morem, quam ad rem pertinere.* Apud *Auguſtin.* de Civ. Dei. VI. 10.

Hortabaris me] ut — opiniones, quas a majoribus accepimus de Diis immortalibus, ſacra, cæremonias, religioneſque defenderem. Ego verò eas defendam ſemper, ſemperque defendi; nec me ex eâ opinione, quam a majoribus accepi de cultu Deorum immortalium, ullius unquam oratio aut docti aut indocti movebit, &c. *Cotta,* apud *Cicer.* de Nat. Deor. III. 2.

[‡] But ſee *Grotius* de Jure B. II. xx. 44.

They had no notion of refuſing to comply with eſtabliſhed rites under pretence of conſcience. They accounted Chriſtians * inexcuſably obſtinate and perverſe when they would not ſacrifice to idols, and no better than fools and madmen, when they would ſuffer death rather than ſubmit to the command of the Magiſtrate.

Theſe were the perſons who deſpiſed and ridiculed the firſt Chriſtians, who reſiſted the Goſpel during its progreſs, who wrote againſt it, and were the laſt defenders of Paganiſm, when under the Chriſtian Emperors it was in a very declining condition.

In the heathen world were alſo many thouſands who lived by the ſuperſtition of mankind, and who therefore would eagerly oppoſe a new doctrine, which, if it prevailed, would put an end to their gain; and though, being illiterate, they could not write and diſpute for Paganiſm, as the philoſophers did, yet they could lie † in behalf

---

* Neque enim dubitabam, qualecunque eſſet quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe et inflexibilem obſtinationem debere puniri. *Plin.* Epiſt. x. 97.

† Haruſpices has fabulas, conjectores, arioli, vates, et nunquam non vani concinnavere fanatici; qui ne ſuæ artes inte-

half of it, and denounce the wrath of the Gods, and ſtir up the populace againſt the Chriſtians.

And accordingly, from time to time, [*] oracles were given out, either real or pretended; either by evil ſpirits, or by evil men, complaining of the Chriſtians, as of enemies to the Gods, and exciting the *Gentiles* againſt them.

But the moſt dangerous enemies to Chriſtianity were Magiſtrates, Princes, Roman Emperors. When theſe were ſuperſtitious, or capricious and cruel, or when they thought it prudent to oppoſe any change in religion, leſt it ſhould hurt the ſtate, the Chriſtians were expoſed to the fury of mercileſs tyrants. Of theſe Emperors ſome were remarkable for all wickedneſs; they had a will to do any miſchief, and nothing to [†] hinder them from doing as they would.

---

intereant, ac ne ſtipes exiguas conſultoribus excutiant jam raris, ſi quando vos velle rem venire in invidiam compererunt, negliguntur Dii, clamitant, &c. *Arnobius*, L. I. p. 13.

[*] Lamprid. *Alexand.* 43. p. 993. in Hiſt. Aug. Script. *Euſeb.* Vit. Conſt. II. 50, 51. *Sozomen.* V. 19. *Chryſoſt.* Homil. de Babylâ.

[†] *Auguſtus* cuncta diſcordiis civilibus feſſa, nomine Principis, ſub imperium accepit. *Tacitus*, Ann. I. 1. Lege

They aſſumed to themſelves divine honours, and hated every thing that looked like goodneſs, courage and liberty. Under ſome of theſe Emperors the Chriſtians were treated with great inhumanity and cruelty; and, which ſeems ſtrange, they met with ill uſage under [*] ſome who had ſeveral good qualities, and from whom better things might have been expected; but the reaſons for it ſeem to have been partly theſe:

1. Thoſe Emperors who had many virtues, yet had their prejudices, [†] or their

ſuperſtition,

---

antiquâ, quæ *Regiæ* nuncupabatur, omne jus omniſque poteſtas populi Romani in Imperatoriam tranſlata ſunt poteſtatem. *Præſat. prima Digeſt. ad Trib.* The ſame is often repeated in the *Inſtitutions*, the *Digeſts*, and the *Code*. The Emperors λέλυνται τοῖς νόμοις; ſays *Dio* LIII. *Licet legibus ſoluti ſimus*; (ſay *Severus* and *Antoninus*) *attamen legibus vivimus.* Inſtit. Lib. II. Tit. xvii. Imperatori *et ipſas Deus leges ſubjecit.* Novell. cv. 2. The notion that they were ſubject to the Senate, is one of *Harduin*'s innumerable réveries.

[*] *Trajan, T. Antoninus, M. Aurelius.*

[†] The Emperor *M. Aurelius* was prejudiced againſt the Chriſtians, and in his own Book xi. 3. has cenſured very unreaſonably, what he ought to have approved, their readineſs and reſolution to die for their religion.

Aliud erat quod maximè gentiles in Chriſtianos commovebat, quod hi ſcilicet pro bono Reipublicæ ſtatu, aut Imperatorum, vel patriæ ſalute offerri ſacrificia improbarent,

iiſque

ſuperſtition, and Chriſtianity had been miſrepreſented to them; nor are any perſons more liable than princes to receive bad impreſſions and falſe accounts, and to have the truth concealed from them.

2. By the * ancient *Roman* laws it was not permitted to introduce any new religion without

---

iiſque nec adeſſe, nec etiam ſive per publicos, ſive per privatos Imperatorum genios jurare acquieſcerent. Ad hæc, Chriſtiani a feſtis ſolemnibus, ludis publicis, aliiſque ejuſmodi ſpectaculis quæ pro victoriis adverſus hoſtes partis, aut Imperatorum natalitiis fieri conſueverant, ſeſe abhorrere teſtabantur. Hinc mirum non eſt, ſi Imperatores, etiam qui religioſiores et mitiſſimi habiti ſunt, Chriſtianos penitùs extirpare conati fuerint, quos nempe non religioni solùm ſuæ, ſed etiam propriæ ſaluti adverſari exiſtimabant. *Ruinart.* Præf. in Act. Martyr.

* *Tertullian* and *Euſebius* ſay that the *Romans* had an ancient law, which forbad the worſhip of new Deities without the permiſſion of the Senate; *ne quis Deus conſecraretur, niſi a Senatu probatus.* Apolog. παλαιοῦ νόμου κεκρατηκότος μὴ ἄλλως τινὰ παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις θεοποιεῖσθαι, μὴ ἐχὶ ψήφῳ καὶ δόγματι συγκλήτου. *Eccl.* H. II. 2.

Julius Paulus, who lived in the time of the emperor *Alexander Severus*, has preſerved to us an ancient law relating to this ſubject: *Qui novas, et uſu vel ratione incognitas religiones inducunt, ex quibus animi hominum moveantur, honeſtiores deportantur, humiliores capite puniuntur.* Sentent. Receptar. L. V. *Tit.* 21.

Under the ſame *Title*, he has another law againſt ſoothſayers and pretenders to inſpiration, who are ordered to be beaten, without the leave of the Magiſtrate, much leſs a religion which directly tended to overturn all the eſtabliſh'd rites and ceremonies,

3. The

---

beaten, baniſhed, &c. *ne humanâ credulitate publici mores ad ſpem alicujus rei corrumperentur, vel certe ex eo populares animi turbarentur.*

Si quis aliquid fecerit, quo leves hominum animi ſuperſtitione numinis terrerentur, Divus Marcus hujuſmodi homines in inſulam relegari reſcripſit. Digeſt. L. xlviii. Tit. xix. 30.

In the *Acts of the Apoſtles* xvi. 21. ſome of the inhabitants of *Philippi* bring this accuſation againſt *Paul* and *Silas*: *Theſe men teach cuſtoms which are not lawful for us to receive neither to obſerve, being Romans.* Where ſee *Grotius.*

Cicero *de Leg.* XI. 8. *Separatim nemo habeſſit Deos, neve novos; ſed ne advenas, niſi publice adſcitos, privatim colunto.* [In the ſame book *ſacra nocturna* are accounted unlawful without particular leave]

Plato has the ſame law. Ἱερὰ μηδεὶς ἐν ἰδίαις οἰκίαις ἐκτήσθω. θύειν δ' ὅταν ἐπὶ νοῦν ἴῃ τινὶ, πρὸς τὰ δημόσια ἴτω θύσων· &c. *Sacella nemo in privatâ domo habeat. Cum verò animum quis ad ſacrificandum induxerit, ad publica ſacrificaturus accedat.* &c. and the tranſgreſſors of this law are to be puniſhed. *De Leg.* X.

The accuſation againſt *Socrates* was, ἀδικεῖ Σωκράτης, οὓς μὲν ἡ πόλις νομίζει Θεοὺς, οὐ νομίζων, ἕτερα δὲ καινὰ δαιμόνια εἰσφέρων. *Plato* Apol. *Xenophon* Memor. *Clericus* Silv. Phil. cap. iii.

Porphyry ſays of *Ammonius,* who, as he pretends, left Chriſtianity for Paganiſm, πρὸς τὴν κατὰ νόμους πολιτείαν μετεβάλετο, *ad vivendi rationem legibus conſentientem deſcivit,* whereas *Origen* (ſays he) lived Χριστιανῶς καὶ παρανόμως. *Euſeb.* E. H. VI. 19. This was the common language of the *Pagans.*

If

3. The people and * the Governors of provinces ſometimes perſecuted the Chriſtians

If *Ulpian*'s Treatiſe on the duty of Proconſuls were extant, we ſhould know what Edicts had been publiſhed againſt Chriſtians by the Emperors, down to the time of *Alexander Severus*. *Domitius* [Ulpianus] *de officio Proconſulis Libro* VIII, *Reſcripta principum nefaria collegit, ut doceret quibus pœnis adfici oporteret eos, qui ſe cultores Dei confiterentur.* Lactantius *Inſt. Div.* V. 11.

Pliny, in his memorable Epiſtle to *Trajan* X. 97. enquires of him how he ſhould proceed againſt the Chriſtians.

Trajan, in his Reſcript, ſo far ſpared the Chriſtians, that he forbad them to be ſought after, or to be condemned upon the evidence of nameleſs informations. But, if a proſecutor appeared, he ordered them to be put to death, unleſs they recanted. *Plin.* Ep. X. 98.

However, as *Pliny*'s Letter to *Trajan* did not ſet the Chriſtians in a bad light, ſo the Emperor's reply was in ſome meaſure favourable to them. He ſeemed willing to connive at them, and not to uſe them rigorouſly.

Afterwards *Adrian* gave a Reſcript to *Minucius Fundanus*, [to be found in *Euſeb.* IV. 9. and at the end of *Juſtin*'s firſt Apol.] which is obſcure. It does not manifeſtly exempt Chriſtians from puniſhment; and yet it ſeems in ſome degree to favour them, and might have been ſo interpreted by a judge who was diſpoſed to put the mildeſt conſtruction upon it. The Chriſtians often appealed to it.

---

* See *Sozomen.* E. H. v. 11. *Euſebius* E. H. VI. 41. IX. 6. where it is ſaid that *Peter* of *Alexandria* ἀθρόως οὕτω καὶ ἀλόγως, ὡς ἂν Μαξιμίνου προστάξαντος, τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτέμνεται· which *Valeſius* tranſlates, *ſubito et abſque ullâ probabili cauſſâ, utpote Maximino jubente, capite truncatur.* I think it ſhould be, *quaſi juſſiſſet Maximinus.* The edicts

againſt

ans without any particular leave or order from the Emperor.

againſt Chriſtians were then repealed, and *Maximinus* at that time rather ſecretly encouraged than openly commanded thoſe cruelties.

Melito, biſhop of *Sardes*, in the apology which he dedicated to the Emperor *M. Aurelius*, ſays; *τὸ γὰρ οὐδὲ πώποτε γενόμενον, νῦν διώκεται τὸ τῶν θεοσεβῶν γένος, καινοῖς ἐλαυνόμενον δόγμασι κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν· οἱ γὰρ ἀναιδεῖς συκοφάνται καὶ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ἐρασταὶ, τὴν ἐκ τῶν διαταγμάτων ἔχοντες ἀφορμὴν, φανερῶς λῃστεύουσι, νύκτωρ καὶ μεθημέραν διαρπάζοντες τοὺς μηδὲν ἀδικοῦντας.——καὶ εἰ μὲν σοῦ κελεύσαντος ταῦτα πράττεται, ἔστω καλῶς γινόμενον· δίκαιος γὰρ βασιλεὺς οὐκ ἂν ἀδίκως βουλεύσαιτο πώποτε· καὶ ἡμεῖς ἡδέως φέρομεν τοῦ τοιούτου θανάτου τὸ γέρας. ταύτην δέ σοι μόνην προσφέρομεν δέησιν, ἵνα αὐτὸς πρότερον ἐπιγνοὺς τοὺς τῆς τοιαύτης φιλονεικίας ἐργάτας, δικαίως κρίνειας εἰ ἄξιοι θανάτου καὶ τιμωρείας, ἢ σωτηρίας καὶ ἡσυχίας εἰσίν· εἰ δὲ καὶ παρὰ σοῦ μὴ εἴη ἡ βουλὴ αὕτη καὶ τὸ καινὸν τοῦτο διάταγμα, ὃ μηδὲ κατὰ βαρβάρων πρέπει πολεμίων, πολὺ μᾶλλον δεόμεθά σου, μὴ περιιδεῖν ἡμᾶς ἐν τοιαύτῃ δημώδει λεηλασίᾳ.* Pious men are now perſecuted and harraſſed through all *Aſia* by new decrees, which was never done before: for impudent ſycophants, and ſuch as covet the poſſeſſions of others, taking occaſion from the edicts, rob without fear or ſhame, and ceaſe not to plunder thoſe who in nothing have offended. — And if theſe things are done by your order, it is enough, all is well, for a juſt Prince can never decree any thing that is unjuſt; and we chearfully bear ſuch a death, as an honour and a reward. Only this favour we beg of you, that you would firſt inform yourſelf concerning men who are obſtinate and inflexible, [*in a good cauſe, as they think, in a bad one, as their enemies pretend*] and then judge, as

4. The Emperors diſliked the frequent* aſſemblies and clandeſtine meetings of Chriſtians

your own equity ſhall direct, whether they deſerve puniſhment and death, or impunity and quiet. But if this reſolution and this new decree, not fit to be enacted againſt barbarians and enemies, proceeds not from you, much more may we entreat you that you would not give us up unprotected to this public injury and popular devaſtation. *Euſeb.* E H. IV. 26.

The place deſerves to be produced, were it only to ſhew the politeneſs of the old Chriſtian Apologiſt. In the Interpretation of *φιλονεικίας* I have followed *Valeſius*, to whom I refer the reader.

* Ab nullo genere non æque ſummum periculum eſt, ſi cœtus et concilia, et ſecretas conſultationes eſſe ſinas. *M. Porcius Cato*, apud *Liv.* XXXIV. 2. At *Crotona*, trecenti ex juvenibus cum — ſeparatam a cæteris civibus vitam exercerent, quaſi cœtum clandeſtinæ conjurationis haberent, civitatem in ſe converterunt, *&c. Juſtin* XX. 4.

Mæcenas is ſaid by *Dio Caſſius* to have given this advice to *Auguſtus*; *τὸ μὲν θεῖον, πάντη πάντως αὐτός τε σέβου κατὰ τὰ πάτρια, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους τιμᾶν ἀνάγκαζε· τοὺς δὲ ξενίζοντάς τι περὶ αὐτὸ καὶ μίσει καὶ κόλαζε, μὴ μόνον τῶν θεῶν ἕνεκα, — ἀλλ᾽ ὅτι καινά τινα δαιμόνια οἱ τοιοῦτοι ἀντεισφέροντες πολλοὺς ἀναπείθουσιν ἀλλοτριονομεῖν· κἀκ τούτου καὶ συνωμοσίαι, καὶ συστάσεις, ἑταιρεῖαί τε γίγνονται, ἅπερ ἥκιστα μοναρχίᾳ συμφέρει·* Worſhip the deity your ſelf, by all means, according to the cuſtom of the country, and compel others to do the ſame; and abhor and puniſh all thoſe who would make any innovations in religion, not only for the ſake of the gods, —— but becauſe ſuch perſons, ſubſtituting new deities, prevail upon many to obſerve foreign laws and inſtitutions; and hence ariſe conſpiracies, confeſtians, as giving an opportunity to cabals and conſpiracies.

Chriſtians were ſometimes perſecuted in a manner which (upon the Pagan ſuppoſition that they offended againſt the laws

---

deracies and fraternities, which are not at all expedient in a monarchy. LII. p. 561. *Ed. Steph.*

Pliny tells *Trajan* that he had forbidden ſuch ſocieties, and that the Chriſtians had obeyed his order —— *quod ipſum facere deſiſſe poſt edictum meum, quo, ſecundum mandata tua, hetærias eſſe vetueram.*

Magi auctores fuere Trajano ut *hetærias*, id eſt, ſodalitates ſive collegia omnia, vetaret, ut videre eſt apud Plinium, *exceptis quæ religionis nomine*, Paganicæ ſcilicet *coïbant*, L. I. §. *Sed religionis*, C. de Collegiis. Cum verò homines naturâ ament ſodalitates, factum inde ut nemo eſſet in Imperio Romano qui non in ſodalitatem deorum alicui dicatam nomen daret, &c. *Grotius* ad Apoc. XIII. 16. See alſo *Columbus* on the writer *de Mortib. Perſec.* c. 34.

Severus gave a reſcript ordering information to be made to the Prefect of *Rome* againſt thoſe who ſhould hold unlawful aſſemblies; which probably affected the Chriſtians, as *Baronius* obſerves 204. §. 12.

Celſus objects theſe clandeſtine meetings to the Chriſtians. See *Origen.* contr. *Celſ.* p. 4.

Tertullian ſays very well *Apol.* 39. Hæc coitio Chriſtianorum merito ſane illicita, ſi illicitis par, merito damnanda, ſi quis de eâ queritur eo titulo quo de factionibus querela eſt. In cujus perniciem aliquando convenimus? Hoc ſumus congregati, quod et diſperſi: hoc univerſi, quod et ſinguli: neminem lædentes, neminem contriſtantes. Cum probi, cum boni coeunt, cum pii, cum caſti congregantur; non eſt factio dicenda, ſed curia.

and deſerved to die for it) muſt be acknowledged not to have been the moſt violent and bloody; for it appears evidently in Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and in the Acts of the Martyrs, that ſometimes * a few perſons only were ſeized and put to death, to intimidate the reſt and to give a check to their increaſe, and that the Chriſtians viſited them in priſon, and attended them, when they ſuffered, in great numbers.

AMONGST the bad diſpoſitions which keep men in error and ignorance, there was one which was more eminently peculiar to the *Gentiles* than to the *Jews*, namely a great careleſsneſs and indifference about all religion in general.

Men of rank and fortunes, of wit and abilities, are often found even in Chriſtian countries to be ſurpriſingly ignorant of religion and of every thing that relates to it. Such were many of the Heathen; their thoughts were all fixed upon other things, upon reputation and vain-glory, upon wealth and power, upon luxury and pleaſure, upon buſineſs or learning. They thought, and they had reaſon to think, that the religion of their country was fable and forgery, and a heap of inconſiſtent lies, which inclined them to ſuppoſe that other religions were no better, and deſerved not to be examined. Hence it came to paſs that even when the Apoſtles preached the Goſpel, and wrought miracles in confirmation of a doctrine every way worthy of God, many *Gentiles* knew little or nothing of it, and would not take the leaſt pains to inform themſelves about it. This appears plainly from ancient hiſtory.

---

* Arrius Antoninus in Aſiâ cum perſequeretur inſtanter, omnes illius civitatis Chriſtiani ante tribunalia ejus ſe manu factâ obtulerunt; cum ille paucis duci juſſis, reliquis ait, ὦ δειλοὶ, εἰ θέλετε ἀποθνήσκειν, κρημνοὺς ἢ βρόχους ἔχετε. *Tertullian* ad *Scapulam*, cap. ult.

About the time of the Apoſtles, and a little after, flouriſhed * ſome learned men in the heathen world whoſe works are ſtill extant. Theſe men muſt have known that there was a religion called the Chriſtian religion; but their ſilence about it, or the very little that they ſay of the Chriſtians, or the falſe account which they give of them, affords reaſon to ſuſpect that they never deſired to be informed concerning Chriſtianity, and that they underſtood nothing of it.

---

* See *Le Clerc de l'Incredulité.* Par. I. ch. 5. whence this remark is borrowed,

We read in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, that *Gallio*, when the *Jews* brought St. *Paul* before him, would not give them a hearing. He thought it unreaſonable that *Paul* ſhould be puniſhed by him becauſe he differed from his countrymen in matters of religion; and he thought right: but whether the doctrine taught by St. *Paul* were true or falſe, that he never conſidered for his own information, and therein he was very negligent.

When St. *Paul* pleaded his cauſe before *Feſtus*, his diſcourſe was altogether to the purpoſe; but becauſe it turned upon a religious ſubject, it preſently tired the judge; he would hear no more about it, and he told St. *Paul* that much ſtudy and learning had made him mad.

When St. *Paul* preached to the *Athenians*, he gained few proſelytes. His auditors were men of learning and underſtanding; but they had more pride than knowledge, and more vanity than good ſenſe, and therefore they left him, and neglected the opportunity of receiving further information and inſtruction.

Another prejudice which the *Gentiles* entertained againſt the Goſpel, aroſe from the mean or bad opinion which many of them had of the *Jews*. For * a conſiderable time they made little diſtinction between *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, accounting Chriſtianity to be only a particular ſort of *Judaiſm*.

The *Gentiles* † called the Chriſtians atheiſts, becauſe they taught that the Gods of the nations were either nothing at all, or dead men or Dæmons; becauſe they worſhipped a ſpiritual Deity in a ſpiritual manner, and had no temples and no images.

---

* When therefore *Nerva* forbad to accuſe any perſon of *Judaiſm*, it is probable that Chriſtians came in for a ſhare of the benefit. *Dio* LXVIII. p. 769. *Fabric.* Luc. Evang. p. 222. The Chriſtian religion in its beginning was perſecuted more by the *Jews* than by the *Romans*. The *Romans* had granted the *Jews* liberty of conſcience, and of obſerving their own laws, not only in *Judæa*, but in other countries where they were ſettled, which appears in many places of *Joſephus*, as *Ant.* XVI. 10. XIV. 7. and in *Philo*. Indeed in the time of *Tiberius*, laws were made and executed to check *Jewiſh* and *Ægyptian* ſuperſtitions. *Tacitus* Ann. II. 85. *Suetonius* Tiber. 36. *Seneca* Epiſt. 108. *Joſephus* Ant. XVIII. 4. The *Jews*, probably, ſuffered little from theſe edicts, and inſinuated themſelves again into the Emperor's favour. The like may be ſaid of the Edict of *Claudius*, mentioned *Acts* xviii. 2. See *Grotius* on *Rom.* xvi. 3. 18. and *Pref.* to *Galat.* and *Whitby* on *Galat.* vi. 12.

† *Juſtin M.* and other Apologiſts.

When the Goſpel began to ſpread in the world, the tares, as Chriſt foretold, ſprang up along with the good ſeed, ſeveral heretics aroſe, who both taught falſe and wicked doctrines, and led very vitious lives. The ancient * Chriſtians complain frequently that the

---

* *Juſtin M.* See *Tillemont*, CARPOCRATIENS, Hiſt. Eccl. Tom. II. *Irenæus* I. 24. *Edit. Oxon.* obſerves that the *Carpocratians* brought diſgrace on the Chriſtian name by pretending to aſſume it, though they had nothing common with Chriſtians either in opinions, or in morals, or in way of life; and then adds theſe words: *Sed vitam quidem luxurioſam, ſententiam autem impiam ad velamen malitiæ ipſorum nomine abutuntur.*

The paſſage is corrupted. *Grabe* gives it up, as a place which he could not correct, and two emendations of it are propoſed, one by *Maſſuet*, the editor of *Irenæus*, the other by *Le Clerc*, Bibl. Choiſ. xxv. 237, which I ſhall not tranſcribe, becauſe I think that they give us the ſenſe indeed, but not the words. The likelieſt way to diſcover where the fault lies, is, from this old *Latin* verſion to gueſs at the *Greek*, which ſeems to have been thus; Ἀλλὰ τὸν μὲν βίον ἄσωτοι, τὴν δὲ γνώμην ἀσεβεῖς, πρὸς (or εἰς) ἐπικάλυμμα τῆς κακίας αὐτῶν, ὀνόματι καταχρῶνται. That is, literally; *ſed vitam quidem* luxurioſi, *ſententiam autem* impii, *ad velamen malitiæ ipſorum, nomine abutuntur. But they, luxurious in their lives, and impious in their doctrines, make a bad* the *Gentiles* would not * diſtinguiſh between the heretics and the true diſciples of Chriſt, and that they laid the crimes of theſe falſe brethren

---

bad uſe of the name [of Chriſtians] *for a cloke of their wickedneſs.*

Irenæus alludes to *Pet.* I. II. 16. μὴ ὡς ἐπικάλυμμα ἔχοντες τῆς κακίας τὴν ἐλευθερίαν.

Somebody who thought that the ſubſtantives and adjectives ought to have agreed, changed *luxurioſi* and *impii* into *luxurioſam* and *impiam.*

So II. 37. —— *enunciare profunda et incredibilia myſteria* prurientibus aures: *Irenæus* wrote, κνηθομένοις τὴν ἀκοήν; from *Tim.* II. IV. 3. as others have obſerved. *Prurientibus aures* has the ſame conſtruction as *vitam luxurioſi,* which greatly confirms my conjecture. See *Clemens Alex.* Strom. III. *i.* p. 510, 511, 523, 532. who uſes ὄνομα in the ſame manner as *Irenæus.*

The old tranſlation which we have of *Irenæus* is cloſe and unpolite, and for that reaſon may often diſcover to us the original; as might eaſily be ſhewed in a multitude of places.

* Hence we may ſee why St. *Paul* ſays to *Titus*; *A man that is an heretic, after the firſt and ſecond admonition reject; knowing that he that is ſuch is ſubverted, and ſinneth, being condemned of himſelf.* For by the account which ancient Chriſtians have given us of ancient heretics, we find that they were turbulent factious men, who wanted to make themſelves heads of parties, or to ſow diſſention amongſt Chriſtians, that in effect they denied the authority of *Moſes,* of the prophets, and of the Apoſtles, and that they blaſphemed the Creator of the world, that their morals were as bad as their belief, and that they ſurpaſſed the *Pagans* in wickedneſs. Such men could feign themſelves Chriſtians only for bad purpoſes, and it was fit that they ſhould be rejected

brethren [illegible] the charge of Chriſtianity; nor could the ſingular innocence and piety of the

---

jected from Chriſtian ſocieties, eſpecially after they had been admoniſhed once and again. Self-condemned they were, either, firſt, becauſe they muſt have known in their own hearts that they had not the ſame belief with thoſe to whom they had joined themſelves; or, ſecondly, becauſe perhaps, when they had been formerly admoniſhed, they had owned themſelves inexcuſable, and had promiſed a better behaviour. Thus the heretic *Cerdo* acknowledged his fault more than once, and was pardoned and received, till at laſt for repeated offences he either was abſolutely rejected by the Church, or left it of his own accord. See *Euſebius* Eccl. H. IV. 11. and *Valeſius* there, and *Tillemont.* H. E. Tom. II. *Marcionites. Art.* 6.

If *Tertullian* be not miſtaken, *Marcion* and *Valentinus* were excommunicated twice at leaſt, *ſemel et iterum*, and *Marcion* repented at laſt, and would have been received into the Church, but *morte præventus eſt.* Tertullian *de Præſcript.* See *Tillemont*, *Marcionites*, and *Bayle*'s Dict. under that word. See alſo *Tillemont*, E. H. Tom. IV. *Sabelliens.*

There ſeems to be no ſmall difference between the heretics of whom St. *Paul* ſpeaks, and thoſe who, though they fall into errors, yet deſire to know and to believe whatſoever Chriſt and his Apoſtles have taught, and to do what they require, and are not ſeduced from the right way by any apparent motives of vice or intereſt.

The *Manichæans* were far enough from being heretics of the better ſort. You may ſee an account of them in *Tillemont* H. E. Tom. IV. and the recantation of a *Manichæan*, before he could be admitted into the Church, in *Cotelerius* Patr. Apoſt. *Vol.* I. p. 543. *Ed. Cler.* Yet *Auguſtin*, addreſſing himſelf to them, treats them with great lenity and comthe Chriſtians ſecure them from * malicious and falſe accuſations.

Becauſe the Chriſtians aſſembled together frequently, and that ſecretly and in the night, in time of perſecution, the *Pagans* took occaſion to forge a † baſe calumny, and to affirm that they met in that manner to commit the moſt execrable crimes. This ſtory, though no proof of it was ever produced, found credit amongſt ſome, which indeed is the leſs wonderful, becauſe wicked ‡ men are uſually inclined to think others as bad as themſelves; and the *Gentiles* knew very well that in ſome of their own religious aſſemblies held in the night-time all works of darkneſs had been committed.

---

compaſſion, *contr. Ep. Manich. cap.* 11. *Tom.* VIII. *Ed. Ben. col.* 151. He had been one of them himſelf, and knew how hard it was to ſhake off inveterate errors and prejudices:

Non ignara mali miſeris ſuccurrere diſco.

* See *Whitby* on *Cor.* i. v. 1.

† *Juſtin* and the Apologiſts. See *Minuc. Fel.* ix. & *Davies.*

‡ Ex nonnullis comperi, perſuaſiſſimum habuiſſe eum (*Neronem*) neminem hominem pudicum, aut ullâ corporis parte purum eſſe: verùm pleroſque diſſimulare vitium, et calliditate obtegere. *Sueton.* Neron. 29. Ut quiſque eſt vir optimus, ita difficillimè eſſe alios improbos ſuſpicatur. *Cicero* Epiſt. ad *Q. Fratr.*

But the blameleſs lives, and the ſhining virtues, and the patient ſufferings of the Chriſtians, diſſipated by degrees theſe idle reports, and thoſe *Jews* and *Gentiles* who had any candour and ingenuity, thought them to be * ſpiteful and ridiculous.

The † novelty of the Chriſtian religion, and the antiquity of *Paganiſm* was another prejudice of the *Gentiles*. Where was your religion a few years ago? ſaid the *Romans*. We follow our anceſtors, as they, with good ſucceſs, followed theirs. We have experienced the profitableneſs of our ſacred rites and ceremonies; the Gods whom we ſerve have protected and rewarded us, and raiſed our nation from ſmall beginnings to a ſtate of great wealth and power. This looſe and popular argument they urged very gravely, as if it had been a ſufficient defence of their fooliſh ſuperſtitions.

---

[*] See *Juſtin*. Dial. p. 155.

[†] In oppoſition to this, *Euſebius* undertakes to prove that Chriſtianity, in a certain ſenſe, is as old as mankind. E. H. I. 4. The Emperor *Conſtantine* ſays the ſame, which perhaps he had learned from *Euſebius*. See *Euſeb*. vit. Conſtant. II. 57. *Juſtin M.* had ſaid the ſame, *Apol.* I. 69.

The plainneſs of the Goſpel, and the artleſs ſimplicity with which the Apoſtles and firſt teachers of it diſcourſed, was matter of offence to the *Gentiles*, and truth appeared fooliſhneſs to them, becauſe it was unadorned. They required a better choice of words, a more elegant manner of expreſſion, more vivacity and fancy, more method and regularity, and more of the art of reaſoning. Philoſophy and oratory, of which they were ſo fond, had ſpoiled them; philoſophy made them vain and conceited, and taught them to defend ſilly notions with captious and deceitful reaſonings: and what was called eloquence at * that time, though much ſtudied and eſteemed, had degenerated, a bad taſte beginning to prevail, which made them deſpiſe the unaffected ſtyle of the New Teſtament.

---

* The time of *Nero*. *Petronius*, who lived at that time, juſtly complains *adoleſcentulos in ſcholis ſtultiſſimos fieri, quia nihil ex iis quæ in uſu habemus, aut audiunt aut vident; ſed piratas cum catenis in litore ſtantes, et tyrannos edicta ſcribentes, quibus imperent filiis, ut patrum ſuorum capita præcidant, ſed reſponſa in peſtilentiâ data, ut virgines tres aut plures immolentur*, &c. But *Petronius* himſelf, as *Huetius* thinks, *judicio uſus eſt in literis valde limato et ſubtili: ſtylo deteriore, affectato, fucato, interpolato: ut plus ei ad exiſtimationem profuiſſe putem obſcænitatem rerum, quam ſe[illegible]is legantiam.*

See alſo *Lucian*, Quomodo Hiſt. conſcribenda ſit.

They complained of the Goſpel, that * it treated men like children, and required an unreaſonable condeſcenſion and ſubmiſſion from them, commanding them to believe every thing without examination and upon the bare authority of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and not proving its aſſertions by an argumentative method.

The truths relating to faith and practice, propounded to us in the Goſpel, are indeed uſually affirmed, and not proved according to the rules of reaſoning. But every ſtudious perſon knows that argumentative proofs of theſe things are ſometimes intricate, obſcure, and above the reach of the bulk of mankind, and that † they may be oppoſed

---

* *Origen* contra *Celſ.* I. p. 8. et VI. *Credo quia impoſſibile eſt*, is often mentioned as a ſally of zeal in ſome old Chriſtian writer. Take it as it ſtands in *Tertullian*; *Crucifixus eſt Dei Filius: Non pudet, quia pudendum eſt. Et mortuus eſt Dei Filius: prorſus credibile eſt, quia ineptum eſt. Et ſepultus reſurrexit: certum eſt, quia impoſſibile eſt.* De Carne Chriſti.

† Argumenta a Philoſophis producuntur ſpecioſa in utramque partem; nec omnium eſt de eorum vi dijudicare. *Grot.* ad *Hebr.* XI. 3.

by

by ingenious men with ſubtil objections which may perplex a perſon of an ordinary capacity. Therefore we may ſuppoſe that one ſent from God to reform and inſtruct the world will have recourſe to ſome plain and ſatisfactory way of eſtabliſhing his authority, which muſt be by working miracles, or by fulfilling ancient prophecies; or by foretelling future events, and that when he has thus prepared men to obey him and truſt in him, he will command as a Lawgiver, rather than reaſon as a philoſopher.

The end of religious teaching is to make men wiſe to ſalvation, and if nothing be wanting to accompliſh this end, there is no reaſon to complain that the * ſtyle is rude and homely, or that the common ways of arguing are not obſerved. He who undertakes to inſtruct others, and has no authority beſides that which he can obtain by raiſing in them a good opinion of his wiſdom and abilities, ſhould omit none of thoſe arts of perſuaſion which ingenious and learned men have cultivated, that he may

ſet

---

* *Le Clerc* on *Cor.* 2. xi. 6. and *Hammond* and *Le Clerc* on *Galat.* xi. 6. and *Junius* on *Clemens,* 1. *Ep.* ad *Corinth.* 3.

ſet truth in the faireſt light: but he who comes from God, and to whom God bears teſtimony, has no occaſion for theſe methods of gaining credit. He ought to be hear'd with reverence and ſubmiſſion, though as St. *Paul* ſays, his bodily preſence be weak, and his ſpeech contemptible. His very imperfections are in one reſpect a recommendation, as they tend to prove that his doctrines are not of his own invention.

Beſides, the ſimplicity of the Goſpel ſuits with the ſubject, which is for the moſt part either an hiſtorical narration, or a collection of precepts. Even in * human laws ſtudied

eloquence

---

* Quæ quidem tradita ſunt breviter, ac nudè; nec enim decebat aliter: ut cum Deus ad hominem loqueretur, argumentis aſſereret ſuas voces, tanquam fides ei non haberetur: Sed, ut oportuit, eſt locutus, quaſi rerum omnium maximus judex; cujus eſt non argumentari, ſed pronunciare verum. *Lactantius* III. 1.

Simplex et nuda veritas eſt luculentior, quia ſatis ornata per ſe eſt: adeoque ornamentis extrinſecus additis fucata corrumpitur: mendacium verò ſpecie placet alienâ. *Idem.*

Non probo, quod Platonis legibus adjecta principia ſunt: Legem enim brevem eſſe oportet, quo facilius ab imperitis teneatur, velut emiſſa divinitus vox ſit. Jubeat, non diſputet. Nihil videtur mihi frigidius, nihil ineptius quam lex

cum

eloquence is out of place. When God speaks and commands, perſpicuity and brevity are the moſt proper ornaments.

Yet we need not acknowledge that the Scriptures are void of thoſe graces which are eſteemed in human compoſitions*. There is in them beauty and ſublimity where the ſubject requires or admits it; though it ſeems often rather owing to the things of which they treat, than to the choice and diſpoſition of words.

When the Chriſtians appealed to the miracles by which the Goſpel was ſupported, the *Gentiles* replied that thoſe miracles were wrought by † magic.

This ‡ was certainly a fooliſh prejudice and a weak objection. If the *Gentiles* meant

---

cum prologo. Mone, dic quid me velis feciſſe: non diſco, ſed pareo. *Seneca* Epiſt. 94.

Βραχεῖς δὲ καὶ σύντομοι παρ' αὐτοῦ λόγοι γεγόνασιν, οὐ γὰρ σοφιστὴς ὑπῆρχεν —— *Breves autem et compendioſi fuere* [Chriſti] *ſermones, non enim ſophiſta erat*—Juſtin M. *Apol.* I.

* *Grotius* ſays that St. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians, rerum ſublimitatem adæquat verbis ſublimioribus quam ulla unquam habuit lingua humana.*

† *Celſus,* in *Origen,* p. 7. and many others.

‡ Many *Pagans* were of opinion that the boaſted arts of Magic were folly and deceit. See *Plin.* XXX. 2. *Sueton. Nero.* 51.

that

[illegible] the miracles were not real, but only illuſions and falſe appearances, this was confuted by the teſtimony of thouſands who had ſeen thoſe wonderful works, and by the nature of many of thoſe works, which was ſuch that there could be no deceit in them. Or if they meant that there were certain wicked arts and charms by which bad men could compel the Gods to obey them and to aſſiſt them in performing ſupernatural things, this is a notion * which was only fit for poetry. Or laſtly, if they meant that the miracles were wrought by the interpoſition of inferior or evil powers, and not by the aſſiſtance of the ſupreme God, the anſwer to their objection is this: The Chriſtian religion is founded upon natural religion, and ſuppoſes that there is a God, and that he is moſt wiſe, moſt powerful, and † moſt good.

Chriſt

---

* See *Broukus.* on *Tibull.* I. II. 43. and *Grotius* de Ver. R. C. IV. 8. *Menander* p. 88.

— εἰ γὰρ ἕλκοι τὸν θεὸν
Τοῖς κυμβάλοις ἄνθρωπος εἰς ὃ βούλεται,
Ὁ τοῦτο ποιῶν ἐστὶ μείζων τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Where ſee *Le Clerc.*

† All religion, natural or revealed, and all our better hopes are founded upon the ſuppoſition that God is good ;

and

Chriſt and the Apoſtles appealed to th[illegible]
and Father of the univerſe, to the [illegible]ſt Cauſ

and as this is of all truths the moſt important, ſo there are many clear and ſtrong proofs of it. I ſhall only mention one or two.

1. To ſuppoſe that God is not good, is to ſuppoſe him weaker, and more imperfect, and worſe than the worſt of his creatures.

In men every evil action may be aſcribed to the temptation of preſent profit or pleaſure, to a power which the mind has of fixing its thoughts entirely upon the object which it deſires, and of overlooking the ill conſequences ariſing from it, and in ſome meaſure to error and miſtake. Thus enticed and deluded a ſinner acts, never chuſing evil for its own ſake. But God, if he were an evil being, would be diſpoſed to evil neither by miſtake, nor temptation, nor paſſion, nor advantage, and would chuſe evil purely as evil.

2. It is the obſervation of a celebrated philoſopher, that πᾶς τὸ οἰκεῖον ἔργον ἀγαπᾷ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγαπηθείη ἂν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἔργου, ἐμψύχου γενομένου, &c. Ariſtot. *Ethic. Nicom.* IX; that the Artiſt loves the work of his hands better than his work would love him, if it were endued with ſenſe and reaſon; and that the perſon who confers a great benefit upon another, loves him whom he obliges better than the obliged perſon loves him. To which we may add that parents generally love their children more than they are beloved by them. And yet in all theſe inſtances, gratitude, one would think, ſhould make the love of the inferior to be the ſtrongeſt; but experience ſhews that it has not this effect. Theſe obſervations may be reduced to a general truth, that love deſcends more than it aſcends; and we may be permitted, I think, to apply this to God and our ſelves, and to ſay that our great and good Creator and Benefactor loves us far better than the moſt dutiful of us love him.

of all things, they declared themſelves to be his miniſters, appointed by him to reform mankind, they declared that all other religions were falſe, and that all the Gods of the *Gentiles* were no gods, they declared that they were ſent to extirpate idolatry, and to overturn the dominion of evil ſpirits; and in atteſtation to this they wrought miracles. Here was a ſolemn appeal to the Almighty, and a publick challenge to all other deities, and to evil Dæmons; it is not therefore * reaſonable to ſuppoſe either that God would permit men to abuſe his name and authority for bad purpoſes and give ſuch power to impoſtors, or that the Gods † of the *Gentiles* and evil ſpirits would not exert their utmoſt power againſt their profeſſed and open enemies, and hinder them from working miracles, if they were able*.

---

* This will likewiſe anſwer the objection of the *Jews*, that Chriſt wrought miracles by the aſſiſtance of the Devil.

† The Pagans were ſometimes offended at their Gods and forſook them, becauſe they did not ſhew their power in reſenting affronts and vindicating their own injured honour. In the reign of *Theodoſius*, it happen'd that the *Nile* did not overflow at the common time. The *Ægyptian* Pagans ſaid it was becauſe they were not permitted to offer their accuſtomed ſacrifices to the River, and grew tumultuous about it. Soon after, he began to ſwell, and flow'd much more plentifully than was uſual; whereupon the *Alexandrians*, who were ever famous for ſcoff and ridicule, cried out in the Theatre, ὡς οἷα γέρων καὶ λῆρος ἐξούρησεν ὁ ποταμὸς, *Nilum, tanquam ſenem ac delirum urinam effudiſſe*; and many of them turn'd Chriſtians. *Sozomen*, H. E. VII. 20.

The

---

* It has been objected to miracles in general, that God, who is moſt wiſe and unchangeable, cannot alter that courſe of nature which with perfect wiſdom he has eſtabliſhed.

1. It would be proper to know what notions the objectors have of the Deity. If by the word *God* they mean the *god* of *Strato* or of *Spinoza*, 'tis very true that ſuch a God cannot alter any thing.

2. When a miracle is wrought, the courſe of nature is altered, but the will and purpoſe of God is not altered, who could not eſtabliſh a courſe which he ſhould not be able to change, and who, when he eſtabliſhed it, knew what changes he would at certain times make in it.

Though miracles ſeem to be the beſt credentials which a perſon can produce, it is poſſible that by being frequently repeated they may loſe ſome of their effect on ſome tempers, and make a fainter impreſſion upon them. May we ſuppoſe this to have been the caſe of ſome careleſs and negligent men who ſaw the miracles of Chriſt and of his Apoſtles?

Chriſt often appeals to his miracles as to a direct and ſufficient proof of his authority; and his Apoſtles ſpeak the ſame language. The *Pagans*, when they were afterwards preſs'd with this argument, to elude the force of it, uſed to ſay that Chriſt and his diſciples wrought miracles by magic art. Some of the Fathers, as *Juſtin* Apol. I. p. 48. and *Irenæus* II 57. thought that the beſt way of removing this objection was to appeal to the prophecies, and to ſay that ſince the miracles of Chriſt had been foretold, they muſt have been true miracles, performed by the divine aſſiſtance,

and

The Chriſtian religion required an open profeſſion before men, which ſeemed alſo unrea-

and not illuſions or tricks of magic. Others, as *Tertullian*, in a certain place, and *Lactantius* V. 3. went ſo far as to own that the miracles of Chriſt would not have been proved to be true miracles, nor diſtinguiſhed from magical operations, unleſs they had been foretold by the prophets.

Arnobius, in his firſt Book, has reaſoned better on this ſubject, though reaſoning was not his talent, and his judgment was not equal to his learning and vivacity. *Origen* prudently inſiſts upon miracles as proving the truth of Chriſtianity no leſs than prophecy. Contra *Celſ.* p. 5.

The *Gentiles* alſo oppoſed miracles to miracles, and the Fathers would not undertake to affirm that ſuch a thing could not poſſibly be. When the *Pagans* ſaid that ſome by imploring the aid of their Gods had been cured of diſeaſes, the Chriſtians replied that it might be true; but that their Gods were Devils, who, *irrepentes corporibus occulti, ut ſpiritus tenues, morbos fingunt, terrent mentes, membra diſtorquent, ut ad cultum ſui cogant, ut nidore altarium vel hoſtiis pecudum ſaginati, remiſſis, quæ conſtrinxerant, curaſſe videantur.* Minucius Felix. p. 137.

The miracles aſcribed to Chriſt and his Apoſtles recommend themſelves to our belief on the following accounts.

They were wrought by perſons who ſolemnly appealed to God, and who declared that they would perform them.

They were wrought in a public manner.

Before enemies and unbelievers.

In a learned age and civilized countries.

Not with any air of pride, vanity, and oſtentation.

Not for the ſake of lucre, or for worldly advantage.

In confirmation of precepts and doctrines good and uſeful to mankind.

At

unreaſonable to the learned *Pagans*, who, as we obſerved before, were generally of opinion that if a man led a virtuous life, it mattered not much what religion he profeſſed, that the ſupreme Being choſe to be worſhipped in various ways, according to the various notions which different people entertained of him, and that every one was obliged for the ſake of public peace to conform to the religion eſtabliſhed in his country.

At a time when men wanted neither power nor inclination to expoſe them if they were impoſtures, and were in no danger of being called Atheiſts and Heretics, and of being inſulted by the populace, and perſecuted by the civil Magiſtrate for ridiculing them.

They were various and numerous.

Of a permanent nature, and might be reviewed and re-examined.

Had nothing fantaſtical and cruel in them, but were acts of kindneſs and beneficence.

They had ceaſed for a long time before Chriſt appeared, and therefore would raiſe the attention of men.

They converted multitudes to the faith.

Were atteſted by proper witneſſes.

Foretold by the prophets, and ſuch as the Jews expected from the Meſſias. See *Grot. de Ver.* R. C. IV. 17.

Acknowledged by adverſaries. See *Grot. de Ver.* II. 5. III. 7. and *Le Clerc*'s notes, III. 14. *Cudworth* Intell. Syſt. p. 271. *Huet.* Dem. Ev. Prop. III. 6, 8. *Bayle* Dict. HIEROCLES. Biſhop *Chandler* Def. of Chriſtian. p. 479.

I ſhall not treat this opinion with contempt: it is perhaps the moſt * ſpecious thing that the *Gentiles* had to ſay for themſelves. Let it be granted that a *Pagan* was not obliged to enquire diligently after all the religious notions and the various modes of worſhip which obtained up and down in the habitable world, nor to ſpend his time in examining what the philoſophers had to urge for their ſeveral tenets, that it was enough for him to practiſe thoſe virtues which had the general approbation, and to honour the Deity, *more patrio*; if we ſhould make even theſe large conceſſions, yet when a Religion, fair and amiable, juſt and holy, and atteſted by miracles, condeſcended to viſit him and to come to ſeek him; to refuſe her a hearing and to reject her with ſcorn was an immoral behaviour, ſhewed a contempt of truth and of the Deity, and was a ſcandalous indolence in a man, who probably would not have refuſed toil of body and attention of mind, if pleaſure, or profit, or praiſe had called him to it.

---

* *Marcilius Ficinus*, in his Treatiſe of the Chriſtian Religion, has in ſome meaſure adopted the ſentiment. He contends, ch. 4. that all religions, how differing ſoever, are ſo far good as they teach men to honour the Deity; and he adds, *forſitan et varietas hujuſmodi, ordinante Deo, decorem quendam parit in univerſo mirabilem.*

To profeſs doctrines which we believe to be falſe, for worldly advantage, for the ſake of quiet, for political reaſons, and out of ſubmiſſion to the civil Magiſtrate, is a vitious exceſs which nothing can juſtify. Not to be content with the liberty of following our own ſentiments, but rudely to attack what is accounted true and ſacred in the nation where we live, is an extreme on the other ſide. The dictates of prudence and of good manners, and the reverence due to civil ſociety, are things which ought to be carefully conſidered by thoſe whoſe inquiries have led them aſide from the religious opinions commonly received.

Laſtly, the *Gentiles* diſliked Chriſtianity, becauſe it was in their way of thinking, an unſociable and domineering religion*, which rejected all Gods, except one, and condemned all other religions as impious and deteſtable.

---

* When *Dionyſius Alex.* was brought before *Æmilian*, and exhorted by him to adore the Gods, he replied, that Chriſtians worſhipped one God, maker of all things. Why, ſo you may, ſaid *Æmilian*, you may worſhip your own God as much as you will, if you will but worſhip our Gods alſo. *Euſeb.* E. H. VII. 11.

SUCH were the prejudices of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, which made ſo many of them unwilling and unfit to receive the Chriſtian religion. But there is reaſon to think that the number of unbelievers, amongſt thoſe to whom the Goſpel was firſt preached, was not altogether ſo great, as is commonly imagined*. Beſides thoſe who profeſſed Chriſtianity, and thoſe who rejected and oppoſed it, there were in all probability multitudes between both, neither perfect Chriſtians, nor yet unbelievers; they had a favourable opinion of the Goſpel, but worldly conſiderations made them unwilling to own it. There were many circumſtances which inclined them to think that Chriſtianity was a divine revelation, but there were many inconveniences which attended the open profeſſion of it; and they could not find in themſelves courage enough to bear them; to diſoblige their friends and family, to ruin their fortunes, to loſe their reputation, their liberty, and their life, for the ſake of this new religion. Therefore they were willing to hope that if they endeavoured to obſerve the great precepts of morality, which Chriſt had repreſented as the principal part, the ſum and ſubſtance of religion, if they thought honourably of the Goſpel, if they never ſpake againſt it, if they offered no injury to the Chriſtians, if they did them all the ſervices that they could ſafely perform, they were willing to hope that God would accept this, and that he would excuſe and forgive the reſt.

---

* See *Epiphanius Hæres.* 30. c. 9. p. 133. and *Petav.* Not. p. 58. where ſome ſtrange things are related, the truth of which I would neither affirm nor deny.

The account which we have of thoſe times is very ſhort; but enough is ſaid in the New Teſtament to ſhew that this ſuppoſition is not groundleſs, and that many thought and acted in this manner; for we are there told that ſeveral believed in Chriſt, but durſt not own it, ſome becauſe they loved the praiſe of men, others becauſe they feared the *Jews*, becauſe they would not be put out of the ſynagogue, others becauſe they would not part with their poſſeſſions. *Joſeph* of *Arimathæa* is ſaid to have been ſecretly his diſciples [*]; *Nicodemus* ſeems to have had the ſame diſpoſition; and afterwards *Gamaliel*, and other Phariſees who oppoſed the perſecution and the puniſhment of the Apoſtles, were probably not a little inclined to Chriſtianity. Thus it was then, and thus it has been ever ſince. Truth has had concealed and timorous friends, who keeping their ſentiments to themſelves, or diſcloſing them *only to a few*, complied with eſtabliſhed errors and ſuperſtitions, which they diſliked and deſpiſed. They who are at all acquainted with hiſtory know that a [†] great number of ſuch examples might be produced.

THE oppoſition which the Goſpel experienced from the *Jews* and *Gentiles* aroſe principally from their vices. To this cauſe the Scriptures aſcribe their unbelief, and obſerve that truth is hidden from thoſe who love darkneſs rather than light, whoſe deeds are evil, who hate to be reformed, whoſe minds are carnal and cannot be ſubject to the law of God, and who have pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs. Of ſuch perſons it is ſaid, that none of them ſhall underſtand.

---

[*] *Tillemont*, Hiſt. Eccl. Tom. II. has collected many things concerning *Nicodemus* and *Gamaliel*, principally from *Lucian* de Inventione *S. Stephani*.

[†] *Eraſmus* Epiſt. 583. ſays, Quid ego potuiſſem opitulari Luthero, ſi me periculi comitem feciſſem, niſi ut pro uno perirent duo? —— Multa quidem præclare et docuit et monuit, atque utinam ſua bona malis intolerabilibus non vitiaſſet! Quod ſi omnia pie ſcripſiſſet, non tamen erat animus ob veritatem capite periclitari. Non omnes ad martyrium ſatis habent roboris. Vereor ne ſi quid inciderit tumultûs, Petrum ſim imitaturus.

Virtue and goodneſs are the health of the ſoul, and vice is a diſeaſe in it. A ſickly and infirm body cannot undergo hard toil, nor can a mind vexed and diſcompoſed with irregular appetites attend to the ſearch after truth, wanting that evenneſs of temper and that vigour which are neceſſary in ſuch enquiries.

The entire oppoſition between the principles of religion and the inclinations of a vitious mind, makes a bad man an improper judge of morality.

A man ſeldom judges right in a cauſe between himſelf and his enemy; prejudice and paſſion incline him to give an unfair ſentence. In ſuch a ſituation is the ſinner when he ſits down to examine the truth of religion; for if religion be indeed what it is commonly ſuppoſed to be, he is a rebel to

God and to reaſon a mere fool, and yet not excuſable upon that account, becauſe his folly is not a natural, but an acquired infirmity. And what can ſuch a one do? He muſt hate the glaſs that ſets his deformity before him, he muſt turn away his eyes and his thoughts from divine truths, and confound the differences between right and wrong, that he may find ſome plea for his conduct.

Since God is the Father of all, ſince his mercy is over all his works, ſince he puts it in the power of every perſon to perform all that he requires from him, and ſince men are expoſed to many temptations, it is reaſonable to think that from this ſupreme Being, from this eternal Fountain of truth and of all good gifts, there iſſues a * light which lighteth every one that cometh into the world, and that whoſoever hath a love of things good and praiſe-worthy, and a deſire of acting a virtuous and rational part in his ſtation, has alſo a bleſſing from God, and a

---

* See *Grotius*, Vot. pro Pac. p. 666. and *Rivet. Apol. Diſcuſſ.* p. 704.

ſecret influence upon his heart and underſtanding to guide and improve him.

This bleſſing, as it is given to the good, ſo it is withholden from the wicked. The mind that delights in unrighteouſneſs, and prefers it to the divine favour, is left to itſelf, to its injudicious choice, and to the fatal conſequences of that choice. God withdraws himſelf from it, and all is darkneſs and diſorder.

II.

The propagation of the Goſpel.

THE ſwift and ſucceſsful progreſs of the Goſpel, which preached by a few inconſiderable perſons overcame a violent oppoſition, and in a ſhort time ſpread itſelf through the world, is commonly and juſtly ſuppoſed to afford convincing proofs of the truth of the Chriſtian religion; and on that account deſerves to be ſeriouſly and carefully examined.

1. The converſion of the *Gentiles* is a proof of the truth of our religion, if it be conſidered as the completion of ſeveral prophecies.

There are paſſages in the old Teſtament applied by Chriſtians to our Lord and to his religion, which muſt be confeſſed to have ſome obſcurity, and to be attended with ſome difficulty; but there are others clear and expreſs: and of this kind are the predictions * conc[illegible]ng the ca[illegible]ng of the *Gentiles*.

There are † many places in the Old Teſtament which declare that in due time there ſhould be a converſion of the *Pagan* world, all nations ſhould turn to the Lord, and worſhip him, and his name ſhould be great amongſt the *Gentiles*, that true religion taught at *Jeruſalem* ſhould prevail over idolatry, that God ſhould ſend forth his Law thence, and rule over the converted nations, guiding and inſtructing them by his holy word, ſhewing them their former errors, and teaching them to lead a new life, and that they who ſhould ſubmit to theſe divine precepts, ſhould alſo lay aſide their mutual animoſities, their hatred and malice, and ſhould be remarkable for charity and univerſal love.

---

* It may be objected; if the calling of the *Gentiles* was ſo clearly foretold, how could it be ſaid in the New Teſtament to have been a myſtery, a myſtery to men and Angels?

That multitudes of *Gentiles* ſhould one day forſake idolatry, and be converted to the worſhip of God, this could ſcarce be unknown, after the prophets had ſaid ſo much about it; but that the *Gentiles* ſhould become God's people without being made proſelytes to *Judaiſm*, and that the ceremonial law ſhould be antiquated, this was not ſo clearly declared as to be underſtood before the event explained it.

† They are collected in *Fabric*. Luc. Evang. p. [illegible]7. or *Huet*. Dem. Ev. Prop. IX. cap. 148.

Thus ſpeak the prophets concerning this great and happy change, and from the manner in which they ſpeak we may obſerve that this reformation of the *Gentiles* ſhould extend itſelf very far, that many nations were to leave their idolatrous rites, and to ſerve the true God; for nothing leſs can well be underſtood by theſe expreſſions; *All the ends of the earth*, and, *the Gentiles from the riſing of the ſun to his going down.*

We may obſerve that therefore theſe prophecies cannot be ſuppoſed to have been fulfilled before the preaching of the Goſpel. Many *Gentiles* from time to time became proſelytes to the *Jewiſh* religion, but the number of thoſe proſelytes was not conſiderable enough to deſerve to be deſcribed in ſuch a manner; nor were * whole nations converted to the worſhip of the true God.

---

* Unleſs, perhaps, the *Samaritans*, and the *Idumæans*. The *Idumæans* embraced *Judaiſm*, being compelled to it by *Hyrcanus*. Joſeph. *Antiq.* XIII. 9. after which they were incorporated into the *Jewiſh* nation, and ceaſed to be a diſtinct people.

Our Lord came into [illegible] world, declared himſelf to be the perſon foretold by the prophets who ſhould work this great change, and in whom the *Gentiles* ſhould truſt, and ſent forth his diſciples to make converts in all nations, promiſing them ſucceſs through his aſſiſtance.

Thus we ſee the prophets and our Lord affirming, that idolatry ſhould decline, and true religion be eſtabliſhed in its place; we ſee Chriſtianity propagated by the Apoſtles through the earth, and prevailing over heathen ſuperſtition whereſoever it appeared; we ſee alſo that this was an event which lay out of the reach of human foreſight. The prophets had no reaſon from the appearance of things to believe that ſuch a thing ſhould come to paſs. The worſhip of God was then confined in a manner to the *Jews*; the *Jews* were in danger of being ſome time or other ſubdued by more powerful nations, of being led away into captivity or deſtroyed; they had * little intercourſe with other people, and were hated or deſpiſed by many of the *Gentiles*; they often fell into the errors and vices of their neighbours. Upon all theſe accounts it ſeemed more probable that the time might come when the *Jews* ſhould be cut off, or become idolaters, than that the Heathen ſhould be converted by their means. And when our Lord ſaid that the converſion of the *Gentiles* was at hand, idolatry was as flouriſhing as it had been in the time of the Prophets, ſuperſtition in many places as prevailing, irreligion as general, and vice, at leaſt as triumphant as ever; the *Romans*, whoſe dominion was then very extenſive, had no high opinion of the *Jews*; yet Chriſt declares that his Apoſtles, though ſeemingly unequal to the undertaking, ſhould ſucceed in it, and reform the corrupted world. The converſion therefore of the *Gentiles*, conſidered as an event which could not be foreſeen by men, which always appeared improbable, and which was * foretold by the prophets

---

* Ἡμεῖς τοίνυν οὔτε χώραν οἰκοῦμεν παράλιον, οὔτ' ἐμπορείαις χαίρομεν, οὐδὲ ταῖς πρὸς ἄλλους διὰ τούτων ἐπιμιξίαις· ἀλλ' εἰσὶν μὲν ἡμῶν αἱ πόλεις μακρὰν ἀπὸ θαλάσσης ἀπῳκισμέναι, χώραν δὲ ἀγαθὴν νεμόμενοι, ταύτην ἐκπονοῦμεν· *Joſephus* contr. *Apion*. I. 12.

---

* *Rutilius*, who lived when, to his ſorrow, theſe declarations were fulfilled, ſays;

Atque

prophets and by Jeſus C[illegible] is a juſt proof that Chriſtianity is a divine revelation, and that the Spirit of God, who ſo long before declared its ſwift and extenſive progreſs, aſſiſted in its eſtabliſhment.

2. The propagation of Chriſtianity is a proof of its truth, becauſe it could never have made its way in the world * without the aſſiſtance of miracles.

Not many years after Chriſt's death we find great numbers of Chriſtians amongſt the *Jews*, and *Gentiles*. We cannot account for their converſion merely from the love of novelty, from ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm, from the promiſes and threats contained in the Goſpel, from the purity of its morality, from the good lives and patient ſufferings of the diſciples of Chriſt. We muſt of neceſſity ſuppoſe that miracles

---

Atque utinam nunquam Judæa ſubacta fuiſſet
Pompeii bellis, imperioque Titi.
Latius exciſæ peſtis contagia ſerpunt,
Victoreſque ſuos natio victa premit. Itiner. 395.

Seneca had ſaid the ſame of the *Jews*; *victi victoribus leges dederunt*, apud *Auguſt.* De Civ. Dei. VI. 11. But *Rutilius* by his *Jews* means the Chriſtians, whom he durſt not openly abuſe.

* *Origen* uſes this argument *Contr. Celſ.* p. 30.

were wrought [illegible]onvince them; and that, for the following reaſons.

The Apoſtles, when they began to preach the Goſpel*, declared that Jeſus Chriſt had done many mighty works, and was riſen from the dead, and had ſent them to convert the world, and had given them a power to work miracles in proof of their miſſion.

By declaring this they were under a neceſſity of working miracles, or of loſing credit among all men. If they wrought no miracles, they confuted themſelves, and could never have made any conſiderable number of diſciples. Since therefore it appears that they pretended to have received the holy Spirit, to ſpeak languages which they had never learned, to perform many miraculous works, and to confer the ſame gifts upon believers, and ſince they prevailed on multitudes of all nations, ranks, ages, and employments, to forſake the religions in which they were educated, and to embrace Chriſtianity, the converſion of ſo many perſons is a proo[illegible]at the Apoſtles were undoubtedly endued with power from on high.

---

* *Mohammed,* prudently enough, always profeſſed that he had no power to work miracles.

St. *Paul* planted and preached the Goſpel at *Corinth*, no obſcure place in ſome remote corner of the world, but a city great and populous, flouriſhing in trade, wealth, and learning, filled with orators and philoſophers, advantageouſly ſituated in *Greece*, and called the light and pride and glory of *Greece*.

To theſe *Corinthians* he writes two epiſtles; in the firſt he blames them for ſome faults which they had committed, amongſt which this is particularly mentioned, that they had not always made the beſt and moſt diſcreet uſe of ſpiritual and miraculous gifts; he gives them ſome directions how to exerciſe theſe gifts, and he tells them that charity, that is, the love of our fellow-creatures, and a ſtudy to promote peace, happineſs, and virtue amongſt men, is a more excellent thing than any miraculous power whatſoever, which, by the way, is not the language of an enthuſiaſt.

In his next Epiſtle he commends the reſpect and obedience which they had paid to him; and to c[illegible]vince ſome of them ſtill farther that he deſerved ſuch regard, he reminds them of the miracles which he had wrought amongſt them; *I ought to have been commended of you; for in nothing am I behind the very chiefeſt Apoſtles, though I be nothing. Truly the ſigns of an Apoſtle were wrought among you in all patience, in ſigns, and wonders and mighty deeds.*

Now, if the *Corinthians* had really no ſuch preternatural gifts, and if St. *Paul* had never wrought any miracles amongſt them, it is impoſſible to think that they would have retained any regard to him and to his doctrine. If we think ſo, we muſt ſuppoſe them to have been perſons who lived in a polite country and had not the ſenſe of ſavages, men who had nothing of men beſides the outward ſhape and reſemblance, men of a different kind from any that the world ever ſaw before or ſince; for the moſt enthuſiaſtic ſect would forſake their founder and teacher, if he ſhould write them long and grave epiſtles full of matters of fact which they all knew to be falſe, appealing to miracles which he had never wrought, and directing them to a c[illegible]ct uſe of powers which themſelves never had.

3. To eſtabliſh a new religion even amongſt a few people, or in one ſingle nation, is a thing in itſelf exceedingly difficult. To reform ſome corruptions which may have ſpread in a religion, or to make new regulations in it, is not perhaps ſo hard, when the main and principal parts of that religion are preſerved entire and unſhaken; and yet even this very often cannot be accompliſhed without an extraordinary concurrence of circumſtances, and may be attempted a thouſand times without ſucceſs: But to introduce a new faith, a new way of thinking and acting, and to perſuade many nations to quit the religion in which their anceſtors had lived and died, which had been delivered down to them from time immemorial, to make them forſake and deſpiſe the Deities which they had been accuſtomed to reverence and worſhip, this is a work of ſtill greater difficulty. The prejudices of education and the ſtubborneſs of ſuperſtition ſeem almoſt invincible; and therefore the prophet *Jeremiah*, when he

upbraids the people for * neglecting their own religion, and embracing the idolatrous worſhip of their neighbours, obſerves that their behaviour in this was not only baſe and ſtupid, and ungrateful, but new and unparallel'd. *Hath any nation changed their Gods, which yet are no Gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.*

But beſides the reſiſtance which ſuperſtition and the prejudices of education would form, worldly policy could not fail to diſcountenance ſuch an attempt. Changes in religion very often produce changes in the ſtate, and according to the maxims of government, all Princes and Magiſtrates look with an evil eye upon teachers of new doctrines, as upon ſeditious and dangerous perſons.

4. It cannot be denied to be a very ſtrange and ſurpriſing thing that perſons whoſe cir-

---

* I ſay, *neglecting*, rather than *forſaking* and *rejecting*. For the people of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, even in their worſt and moſt idolatrous times, did never abſolutely and totally renounce the true God; they worſhipped falſe Gods with and beſides him. But God, who would not ſuffer the honour due to him alone to be thus given to others, nor bear a rival, often reſents and repreſents it as no better than apoſtaſy. See the Commentators on *Acts* viii. 42.

cumſtances and natural abilities were low and mean, ſhould have ſucceeded in ſo great an undertaking.

It might juſtly be expected of one who ſhould perform ſuch a thing, that he ſhould be a victorious and virtuous prince, who ſhould make himſelf both reverenced and beloved, or a philoſopher remarkable for wiſdom and eloquence, ſkilled in all the arts of perſuaſion, and formed by nature to inſinuate himſelf into the favour of men. But when perſons of mean extraction, of no human learning, poor, obſcure and friendleſs, ſet about it, nothing can follow but ſcorn and diſappointment, unleſs the Divine aſſiſtance be added, which can give ſtrength * to weakneſs, and wiſdom to ignorance, and accompliſh its purpoſe by the moſt unpromiſing means.

5. If theſe perſons are not only of mean rank and abilities, but expoſed to ſlander

---

* Mirum eſt quam parum acuti eſſent Apoſtolorum nonnulli, ſed datâ operâ tales a Chriſto electos fuiſſe veriſimile eſt; ne dum putabant ſe intelligere quis eſſet, quidve moliretur, quidpiam ingenio ſuo freti, quod Evangelio noceret, aggrederentur; neve poſſent dogmatum, quæ nunciabantur, inventores haberi. *Clericus* ad *Joan.* XIV. 7. Vide etiam *Valeſium* ad *Conſtant.* Orat. in *Euſebio*, cap. II. p. 687.

and calumny, and greatly hated by the world; there is ſtill leſs proſpect of ſucceſs. Whoſoever would command the attention, the reſpect and obedience of men, muſt ſtand fair in their opinion, as one who is diſintereſted and who ſeeks their good. He who, though undeſervedly, has loſt his reputation, has loſt many opportunities of doing ſervice to mankind: what comes from him, though commendable and profitable in itſelf, is often ſuſpected, ſlighted, and ill received. I have already ſhewed the great hatred which the generality of the *Jews* and *Gentiles* bare towards the firſt Chriſtians, and the cauſes and effects of that hatred. Therefore the progreſs of the Goſpel, in ſpite of all the lies which had been told concerning it, of all the malicious oppoſition which its profeſſors underwent, can only be aſcribed to the prevailing force of truth and innocence, and to the protection of the Almighty.

6. The eſtabliſhing of Chriſtianity in ſo many nations, and amongſt perſons of all ranks and conditions, is an argument in favour of it. Never was there a religion which in this reſpect can be compared with

it; for it united the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that is, perſons in many reſpects the moſt oppoſite, it brought over rich and poor, learned and unlearned, it ſpread through barbarous and ſavage nations, and through the moſt polite and wiſe people, and made its progreſs far and wide.

The Apoſtles began with the *Jews*, and though they could not ſucceed ſo well as to reform the whole nation, though the bulk of them remained incorrigible till deſtruction overtook them, yet the harveſt was by no means contemptible. Twenty years were not paſſed from Chriſt's reſurrection, when St. *Paul* coming to *Jeruſalem*, was told by the Diſciples, *Acts* xxi. 20. *Thou ſeeſt, Brother, how many* * *thouſands of Jews there are which believe.* So mightily did the word of God prevail, even in the capital city of that diſobedient people. In other nations the ſucceſs was greater, and in leſs than forty years after Chriſt, an innumerable multitude of believers were found in moſt parts of the known world.

---

* *πόσαι μυριάδες, how many myriads, ten thouſands,* that is, *how great a number.*

A religion which can thus recommend itſelf to all tempers and meet with ſo wide an approbation, muſt in all probability be founded on truth, and agreeable to the dictates of reaſon.

7. To convert nations to a ſtrict religion from religions which give great indulgences, and are more ſuitable to depraved inclinations, is a difficult thing. This was the caſe in the propagation of the Goſpel; for the *Greek* and *Roman* Gentiles were not very rigid in their practical notions of morality, and accounted many things to be either harmleſs, or ſmall faults, which the Goſpel abſolutely condemned; and the *Jews* by their own interpretations had made their religion compliable, and accommodated to their paſſions. Now when perſons have been thus educated, and taught to account themſelves virtuous and pious at a cheap rate, and without labour and pains, when they think that they can ſecure to themſelves God's favour here and hereafter, and yet purſue their pleaſures with little reſtraint, they are extremely indiſpoſed towards a religion which requires quite another ſtrictneſs in thought, word, and deed.

66960

It appears to them a ſevere, moroſe, and melancholy ſyſtem, a cruel tyranny, and a heavy burden, and there muſt be bright and overbearing evidence to work a thorough reformation in them.

8. The converſion of * very vitious perſons from ſin to righteouſneſs is ſtill more difficult, as experience and reaſon will teach, and is ſometimes compared in Scripture to a reſurrection from the dead, and to changes naturally impoſſible. Though Chriſtianity made its principal progreſs amongſt well-diſpoſed minds, yet ſeveral were won over to it, who had been remarkably wicked before; and this is a proof that there muſt have been very plain and ſtrong indications of its truth, which could overbear all the obſtinate oppoſition of habitual vice.

9. The converſion of multitudes to a † ſuffering ſtate, and to a religion ſo little favourable

---

* *Origen* urges this argument *Contr. Celſ.* p. 21. and in other places.

† Nullo modo fieri poteſt, ut quiſquam tanti æſtimet æquitatem et fidem, ut ejus conſervandi cauſsâ nullum ſupplicium recuſet, niſi iis rebus aſſenſus ſit, quæ falſæ eſſe non poſſunt. *Cicero* Acad. Quæſt. II. 8.

favourable as it was at that time even to our innocent inclinations, is another argument in behalf of the Goſpel. We all naturally love friends, relations, reputation, liberty, eaſe and quiet, food and raiment, and life. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that a man will not part with all theſe upon no evidence that God requires it, and no ſecurity that he will reward it.

The converſion of ſo many, who laid down their lives *for Chriſt, in whatſoever* way we conſider it, abounds with proofs of the truth of the Goſpel. The courage and conſtancy *, with which the firſt Chriſtians underwent all that human nature ſhuns and fears, is aſtoniſhing. Even women and young people ſuffered with unſhaken reſolution tortures which we cannot read without horror. It is very reaſonable to ſuppoſe that God and his good Spirit enabled them to bear in this manner what they bare for his ſake.

The Chriſtian Church was ſometimes expoſed to perſecutions which naturally and in the ordinary courſe of things muſt have put an end to a falſe religion. I know it has been often ſaid that perſecution is not the way to deſtroy, but rather to animate and enlarge a ſect. Ill uſage makes men hate doctrines which tyrannical oppreſſors would force upon them, and fonder of their own opinions than they were before; ill uſage often gives them a religious turn of mind, weans them from a love of the world, and teaches them to place their hopes and confidence in God; and therefore the conſtancy with which a perſon endures ſufferings for his religious ſentiments is not a certain proof that his notions are well-grounded. All this will hold true concerning that leſs violent kind of perſecution which extends only to baniſhment, impriſonment, fines, and the like. But when it proceeds ſo far as to take away life in a cruel manner, bare obſtinacy of temper will ſeldom hold out; a rational conviction and a divine aſſiſtance ſeem neceſſary to ſupport perſons under ſo ſevere a trial.

---

* In this, ſays *Chryſoſtom*, the Chriſtians far ſurpaſſed the holy perſons recorded in the Old Teſtament, none of whom is ſaid to have rejoiced in ſuffering for righteouſneſs ſake.

It has been alſo ſaid that almoſt all ſects have their martyrs; and true it is that men may ſuffer, and have ſuffered for falſe opinions*.

nions*. But the caſe of the firſt Chriſtians is very different. They ſuffered in behalf of facts. They gave their teſtimony to ſigns and wonders which they had beheld with their own eyes, and on which their faith was founded; in this they perſiſted, and for this they died. But no man, not even an enthuſiaſt, will lay down his life in confirmation of facts which he knows to be falſe.

I have endeavoured to ſhew that from the propagation of the Goſpel the truth of it may be proved, as it was foretold by the Prophets, as it abſolutely required the aſſiſtance of miracles, as it overcame the greateſt difficulties and oppoſition, and as it was conducted and accompliſhed by perſons naturally unqualified for the undertaking.

In this we may ſee one difference between the methods of human wiſdom and of Divine wiſdom. Human wiſdom ſpares no

---

[*] Ut pro conceptâ opinione mortem quis ſubeat fieri poteſt, quanquam et hoc rarum eſt; at ut quis idem faciat pro teſtimonio rei quam falſam eſſe novit, et unde nihil aut ipſi aut aliis boni ſperari poſſit, omnibus ſani judicii hominibus incredibile videtur. *Grotius* ad *Matt.* xxviii. 13.

pains and induſtry in ſeeking out and applying helps and inſtruments proper in the ordinary courſe of things to bring about ~~its~~ deſigns; but Divine wiſdom often chuſes means in all appearance unſuitable, and yet in reality the moſt effectual; which conduct of Providence St. *Paul* thus deſcribes: *God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe, and God hath choſen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed hath God choſen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.*

This great event our Lord probably had in view, when he ſaid to his Diſciples; *He that believeth on me, the works that I do, ſhall he do alſo, and greater works than theſe ſhall he do; becauſe I go unto my Father.* We cannot name any miracle wrought by any Apoſtle which in any ſenſe can be ſaid to ſurpaſs the miracles wrought by Chriſt, except the converſion of the *Gentile* world, which, when we conſider the difficulties attending it, and the oppoſition made to it, and the wonderful works wrought to accomplish it, and the happy effects and conſequences of it, may well be conſidered as a more illuſtrious evidence of God's power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, than even our Saviour's miracles of caſting out devils, healing the ſick, and raiſing the dead.

I have taken notice of the cauſes, which in the ordinary courſe of things ſhould have ſtopped the progreſs of Chriſtianity. If every thing had been againſt it, and nothing for it, it muſt have periſhed at its birth. Let us therefore conſider, on the other hand, what there was to help its progreſs, and to recommend it to mankind; and here we ſhall find at the ſame time new proofs of its divine original, ſince every thing that contributed to its eſtabliſhment, is a teſtimony of its excellence.

1. Firſt then the prophecies concerning the calling of the *Gentiles*, and the * miracles wrought by the Chriſtians, were a ſuf-

---

* We have *Origen*'s teſtimony, that many, beſides St. *Paul* and *Cornelius*, were called to Chriſtianity in a miraculous manner. *Contr. Celſ.* p. 35. And *Grotius* cites it, and approves it, on *Luke* xiv. 23. *Tertullian* De Anim. 47. ſays the ſame; as alſo *Euſebius*, *Jerom*, and *Sozomen*. See *Euſebius* VI. 5.

ficient recommendation of the Goſpel to all ſerious, inquiſitive, and ingenuous minds. But theſe evidences have been already conſidered.

2. Another thing which might reconcile the learned *Gentiles* to Chriſtianity, was reſemblance and conformity, greater or leſs, between the theological doctrines of revealed religion, and the * opinions of ſome or other

---

* Namely, one ſupreme God.

The Platonic Trinity, of which the firſt is τὸ Ἓν, τ' Ἀγαθὸν, One, moſt Simple, and abſolutely Good and Perfect; the next Νοῦς or Λόγος, Wiſdom, Reaſon, the Word, who is the δημιουργὸς, the maker of all; thirdly Ψυχὴ, the univerſal Soul or Spirit, pervading all things.

Seneca's words, though they ſeem only to expreſs ſo many names, or ways of conſidering God, are ſingular and remarkable.—— *Quiſquis formator univerſi fuit, ſive ille* Deus *eſt potens omnium, ſive incorporalis* Ratio, *ingentium operum artifex, ſive divinus* Spiritus, *per omnia, maxima, minima, æquali intentione diffuſus.*—— Indeed he adds, *ſive Fatum*, &c. Conſol. ad Helv. 8.

The doctrine of a Mediator, ſon of the Deity, one or more, who conveyed bleſſings from God to men, and recommended men to the favour of God.

The doctrine of an evil Dæmon, who though very powerful, was inferior to the good Deity, and ſhould be aboliſhed by him.

The doctrine of three ſtates of the world, that all was created fair and good in its kind, that there has been a fall and empairing of this original goodneſs, and that there ſhall other of the wiſer *Gentiles* in various ages and places, amongſt whom are found evident traces of the doctrines of one God and Father of all, of a Mediator, of the original beauty and perfection of the creation, of the fall of men and Angels, of a reſtitution to a happier ſtate, of the conflagration of the world, of the ſoul's immortality, of future rewards and puniſhments.

3. Chriſtianity had likewiſe this advantage, that its precepts were for the moſt part agreeable to the doctrines which ſome of the beſt *Pagan* authors had delivered.

The *Gentiles*, though in their ſearches after wiſdom and knowledge they had fallen into many errors, yet had diſcovered many * excellent truths; and if a judicious

ſhall be a reſtitution of things to their ancient beauty and perfection.

Proofs of theſe tenets may be found in *Cudworth* Intell. Syſt. *Hyde* Relig. Vet Perſ. *Ramſay*'s Diſſert. ſubjoined to the Travels of *Cyrus*. *Vitringa* in *Iſai*. 45. p. 496. *Joſ. Mede*, B. III. Ch. III. p. 626. and Comment. in *Apocal*. p. 475. *Prideaux* Lett. to the Deiſts. Sect. 7. *Fabricius* De Ver. Rel. Chriſt. C. VIII. p. 312. *Huet*. Alnet. Quæſt. p. 290, &c. not to mention many others.

* Αἱ. μεγάλαι φύσεις καὶ γυμναὶ παθῶν ἐυστοχοῦσί πως περὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, *Great minds and free from perturbations have*

dicious collection * had been made of the uſeful doctrines which ſome or other of them in various times and places had taught.

---

have a happy ſagacity in diſcovering truth, ſays *Clemens Alex.* Strom. II. p. 482. ſpeaking of *Plato.* The favourable opinion which many Chriſtians entertained of this philoſopher gave riſe to a pretty fiction mentioned by *Anaſtaſius Antiochenus, and Nicetas*, that when Chriſt deſcended into *Hades* to preach the Goſpel to the dead, the firſt who believed in him and was converted, was *Plato.*

* The conformity of Philoſophy and Chriſtianity in many things has been ſhewed by ſeveral of the ancient Fathers, particularly by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and by *Euſebius* in *Præp. Evang.* I ſhall only cite *Lactantius*; *Docemus nullam ſectam fuiſſe tam deviam, nec philoſophorum quenquam tam inanem, qui non videret aliquid ex vero. — Quod ſi extitiſſet, aliquis, qui veritatem ſparſam per ſingulos, per ſectaſque diffuſam colligeret in unum, ac redigeret in corpus, is profecto non diſſentiret a nobis.* Inſt. VII. 7. See *Grotius* de Ver. C. R. IV. 12. The Philoſophers all prepared the way, though undeſignedly, for the Goſpel, by expoſing and overturning the popular and fabulous religions. Epicureiſm itſelf, though of all ſchemes the remoteſt from Chriſtianity, yet in ſome things agreed with it, as;

1. In recommending temperance and ſobriety. See *Lucretius* II. 14. &c. *Juvenal*;

Quantum, Epicure, tibi parvis ſuffecit in hortis.

Seneca does juſtice to *Epicurus* on this head many times.

2. In ſuppoſing that this world would one day periſh. *Lucret.* II. 1144.

3. In deſpiſing and expoſing the poëtical, popular, and civil religion of the *Gentiles.* The impoſtor *Alexander*, ſays *Lucian*, was upon good terms with the Platonics, Stoics, and Pytha-

taught, a ſyſtem of morality might have been drawn up which would bear no ſmall reſemblance to the dictates of the Goſpel. And

---

Pythagoreans, but mortally hated the Epicureans and Chriſtians, and therefore gave out that *Pontus* ſwarmed with atheiſts and Chriſtians, and that the people ought to drive them away with ſtones, if they expected to have the God propitious.' And when he celebrated initiations of his own contrivance, *on the firſt day of the ceremonies, proclamation was made: If any Atheiſt, Chriſtian, or Epicurean, comes to pry into the ſecret rites, let him be gone. But ye who believe the God, approach, and be initiated, and happineſs attend you! Then they cleared the place: and he began, ſaying, Out with the Chriſtians; to which all the multitude anſwered, Out with the Epicureans.* καὶ ἐν μὲν τῇ πρώτῃ, πρόῤῥησις ἦν τοιαύτη· εἴ τις ἄθεος, ἢ Χριστιανὸς, ἢ Ἐπικούρειος, ἥκει κατάσκοπος τῶν ὀργίων, φευγέτω· οἱ δὲ πιστεύοντες τῷ θεῷ, τελείσθωσαν τύχῃ τῇ ἀγαθῇ. Εἶτ' εὐθὺς ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐξέλασις ἐγίγνετο· καὶ ὁ μὲν ἡγεῖτο, λέγων, Ἔξω Χριστιανούς· τὸ δὲ πλῆθος ἅπαν ἐπεφθέγγετο, Ἔξω Ἐπικουρείους *Lucian* Alex.

The reaſons for which this Juggler turned out the Epicureans and Chriſtians are plain enough: but *Dodwell* ſuppoſes that *Alexander* was afraid leſt the Chriſtians ſhould break the ſpell, and drive away the evil ſpirit. *Diſs. Cypr.* X. 30.

Arnobius L. iii. p. 103. ſays that ſome Pagans wanted not only to have the Scriptures deſtroyed, but alſo the philoſophical works of *Cicero*. 'Tis probable enough.——'*cùm ſciam eſſe non paucos, qui averſentur et fugiant libros de hoc ejus* —— *cùmque alios audiam muſſitare indignanter, et dicere, oportere ſtatui per Senatum, aboleantur ut hæc ſcripta, quibus Chriſtiana religio comprobetur, et vetuſtatis opprimatur auctoritas.*

And this doubtleſs was a great advantage to Chriſtianity, that the New Teſtament alone ſhould contain in it every valuable truth which different perſons at different times by a ſober uſe of reaſon had diſcovered, without the errors which they had blended with thoſe truths.

4. At the time when * the Goſpel was firſt preached, there was a great number of *Gentiles*, who were proſelytes to the *Jewiſh* religion ſo far, that they worſhipped the God of *Iſrael*, and renounced the follies and vices of *Paganiſm*. Moſt of theſe perſons were well diſpoſed to receive the Goſpel, and were converted by the Apoſtles. They of whom our Saviour ſays, that the *Phariſees* made them twofold more the children of hell than themſelves, ſeem to have been the other ſort of proſelytes, who received circumciſion and the whole law of *Moſes*.

---

ritas, &c. It is certain, and might eaſily be proved, that Pagan authors have been at leaſt as free in cenſuring and ridiculing their poëtical and popular religion as any of the ancient Chriſtian writers. The *Fathers* therefore took no liberty in this, which had not been long and generally allowed.

* See *Mede* B. I. *Diſc.* 3.

5. Another cauſe of the progreſs of Chriſtianity was the importance of the truths contained in the Goſpel. The Apoſtles, when they had prepared men to believe and obey them, by giving ſufficient proofs of their miſſion, propoſed to them the Chriſtian religion as the only way by which they could hope to avoid extreme miſery in the world to come, and to obtain everlaſting happineſs. A day of judgment, when every one ſhould receive according to his works, a reſurrection to eternal life or condemnation, were the motives by which they preſſed repentance and obedience.

6. Another thing which contributed to the propagation of the Goſpel was the amiable character of the Apoſtles and of the Chriſtians of that age. The diſciples of the Lord were examples of fervent zeal for the welfare of mankind, of an inoffenſive behaviour, of diſintereſtedneſs and ſelf-denial, of indefatigable induſtry, of the moſt extenſive charity, of patience and courage and conſtancy, and of a regular practice of all that they taught. The firſt Chriſtians

reſembled * their teachers in theſe good qualities, and it was no ſmall advantage to them in their apologies for themſelves and for their religion to be able to appeal boldly to their innocence and integrity.

That we may have a right ſenſe of this, we ſhould conſider what it was to be a Chriſtian in thoſe days, leſt we be deceived by the vulgar uſe of the word, and by the notion which we at preſent entertain about it.

To be a good Chriſtian at that time was to be an example of well-tried virtue, of true wiſdom, and of conſummate fortitude; for he ſurely deſerves the name of a great and a good man, who ſerves God, and is a friend to mankind, and receives the moſt ungrateful returns from the world, and endures them with a calm and compoſed mind, † who dares look ſcorn and infamy and

---

* However we ſhould not carry the notion of the ſanctity of the old Chriſtians too high: that they had their defects appears plainly from the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles and of *Clemens Romanus.*

† Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent;
Reſponſare cupidinibus, contemnere honores
Fortis, &c, *Horat.*

and death in the face, who can ſtand forth unmoved and patiently bear to be derided as a fool and an ideot, to be pointed out for a madman and an enthuſiaſt, to be reviled as an atheiſt and an enemy to all righteouſneſs, to be puniſhed as a robber and a murderer. He who can paſs through theſe trials is a conqueror indeed, and what the world calls courage, ſcarce deſerves that name when compared to this behaviour.

This conſtant and pious greatneſs of ſoul under the moſt afflicting circumſtances was one of the means * by which Chriſtianity was propagated. The example of a perſon who is humble and reſolute in adverſity, who places his whole truſt in God, when God ſeems to forſake him; this example preaches the Goſpel more effectually than the moſt ingenious and learned diſcourſe, and inclines others to think and to ſay, ſurely that faith muſt be rational and well-grounded which produces ſuch noble effects, and that religion muſt have God for its author

---

* Duris ut ilex tonſa bipennibus,
Nigræ feraci frondis in Algido,
Per damna, per cædes ab ipſo
Ducit opes animumque ferro. *Horat.*

thor which can ſupport the mind under all difficulties and preſſures.

7. Laſtly, the Goſpel preſented to men a diſpenſation of ſuch awful and impartial juſtice ſo admirably tempered with goodneſs, clemency and forbearance, that it appeared highly worthy of him from whom it proceeded, and as ſuitable to thoſe to whom it was offered. It required a regular and univerſal regard to righteouſneſs, but it offered an aſſiſtance which ſhould add ſtrength to human weakneſs: it gave no hopes to ſtubborn and habitual offenders; but it left room for repentance and amendment, and excluded none who by a change from evil to good would make themſelves objects of the Divine mercy.

III.

The kingdom of Chriſt.

AMongſt the offices which our Saviour ſuſtained, the office of King is firſt in dignity. Under this character he is deſcribed by the Angel who was ſent to his mother; under this character he is foretold by the prophets.

The firſt prediction of Chriſt's regal office is the promiſe which God made to *David*, that his houſe, and his throne, his ſeed and his kingdom ſhould be eſtabliſhed for ever, as the days of heaven, as long as the ſun and moon ſhould continue; of which promiſe mention is often made in the hiſtorical books of the Old Teſtament and in the *Pſalms*. Hence the *Jews* concluded that from *David* ſhould ariſe the Meſſias.

The Prophets frequently ſpeak of this promiſed perſon, as of a king, and *David** often deſcribes the child who ſhould deſcend from him, as a great and mighty Prince.

---

* Pſalm ii. xlv. cx.

I propoſe to conſider,

I. When our Lord's kingdom began:

II. What are the particular characters of his kingdom, which ſhould diſtinguiſh it from all other empires.

I. There is a kingdom which our Lord had from the beginning, as he was the Word of God, and the Son of God, and the perſon by whom God made all things. But the kingdom of which we are now ſpeaking, is that kingdom which he was to receive when he became man, and which was foretold by the prophets, and concerning which the Angel thus ſpeaks in St. *Luke*'s Goſpel; *He ſhall be great, and ſhall be called the Son of the Higheſt, and the Lord God ſhall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there ſhall be no end.* And the time when it began is to be firſt conſidered.

The kingdom of Chriſt is commonly accounted to have begun when he aſcended into heaven, and ſent down the holy Ghoſt. Nevertheleſs our Lord may be truly ſaid to have been born a king, and his kingdom may commence with his nativity, though he did not exert many acts of royal authority, or ſuffer his reign to be manifeſt before his aſcenſion.

For ſoon after his birth the Wiſe men were guided by a heavenly light, and came and offered him preſents, and paid him that worſhip which uſed to be paid to Eaſtern kings, and acknowledged him as the great king who was to ariſe in *Judæa*.

After this he continued in obſcurity 'till he entered into his miniſtry, during which he gave ſome intimations of his royal dignity, and permitted himſelf to be acknowledged as a king, but ſparingly and ſecretly, that he might not offend the civil magiſtrate; for,

Firſt, he took upon him the name of *Meſſias* or *Chriſt*, and ſuffered it to be given to him. Now Meſſias, or Chriſt, in the opinion of all the *Jews*, was the name of that great king foretold by the prophets; and conſequently all who believed him to be the Meſſias owned him for their king. *Na-*

thanael ſays to him; *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Iſrael:* and Chriſt accepts the acknowledgment. Afterwards, when he was entering into *Jeruſalem*, all his diſciples praiſed God, and ſaid; *Bleſſed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord.* At which the Phariſees were offended, and ſaid to him; *Maſter, rebuke thy diſciples. But he anſwered: If theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out.*

Secondly, he ſuffered himſelf to be called, *the Lord*, which implies as much.

Thirdly, it is the office of a king to give laws, and this office he executed.

Fourthly, when *Pilate* aſked him whether he was a king, Chriſt owned to him that he * was; but to ſatisfy him, he told him farther, that his kingdom was not like the kingdoms of this world, and was not oppoſite to the *Roman*, or to any other human government. This is that good confeſſion, which, as St. *Paul* obſerves, he witneſſed before *Pontius Pilate*.

---

* Cum vero Jeſus hic regem ſe fateatur, negari mihi videtur non poſſe regnum ejus aliquo modo inchoatum eſſe cum veritatem cœpit docere: nam ita ipſe apud Joannem regnum interpretatur. Neque obſtat quod paſſim regni ejus initium duci videtur ab evectione in cœlum: id enim de plenâ regni poſſeſſione intelligendum eſt.— Certe poteſtas remittendi peccata, quam Jeſus vitam mortalem agens exercuit, ad regnum pertinebat, ut et liberrima illa miraculorum pro arbitrio diſpenſandorum poteſtas. *Grotius* ad *Mat.* xxvii. ii.

Thus did Chriſt's kingdom begin with his birth, but whilſt he dwelt here below it was ſmall and obſcure, and eſcaped the notice of the world. His ſubjects were few, weak in faith, and not confirmed in their obedience, and they forſook him and hid themſelves when he was in danger. His kingdom was like a grain of muſtard ſeed; but ſtill it was a kingdom. And therefore, being aſked by the *Phariſees* when the kingdom of God ſhould come, he anſwer'd; *The kingdom of God cometh not with obſervation, neither ſhall they ſay, Lo here, or, Lo there, for the kingdom of God is within you.* Which is as if he had ſaid, My kingdom makes not its firſt appearance, and is not uſhered in with royal pomp and ſplendor, like the *Aſſyrian*, *Ægyptian*, *Babylonian*, *Græcian*, or *Roman*. It comes ſilently and ſteals upon the world unobſerved; for indeed it is already begun, and you know it not.

Hitherto we have ſeen our Saviour's kingdom in its infancy; but as ſoon as he was riſen from the dead, and at his aſcenſion, it began to be very viſible and remarkable. Then as the lightning which ſhineth from one ſide of heaven to the other, ſo was the Son of man in that day. His glory and his Goſpel were propagated through the world with amazing irreſiſtible ſwiftneſs. And therefore the Apoſtles repreſent him as then inveſted with royal power, and beginning his reign, becauſe it then began to be conſpicuous. Thus St. *Peter* tells the *Jews* that God had raiſed up *Jeſus* from the dead to ſet him on the throne of his father *David*, that he had ſet him at his own right hand and made him Lord of all, and Chriſt, or Meſſias, or the anointed king of *Iſrael*; that he had exalted him to his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour. And our Lord ſays of himſelf, after his reſurrection, that all power was given to him in heaven and in earth. In the Revelation he is called, *King of kings, and Lord of lords*. This royal dignity, this high exaltation, this name above every name, to which Angels and men ſhould bow, is repreſented by St. *Paul* as a reward which God conferred upon Chriſt for his humiliation and ſufferings. If we therefore conſider Chriſt as man, it was a new dignity which he had not before his aſcenſion, or rather, which he had in a more imperfect degree; but as he was the eternal Son of God, he had, as he ſays of himſelf, * glory with the Father before the world was.

II. The ſecond thing which I propoſed, was to examine what are the particular characters of Chriſt's kingdom which diſtinguiſh it from all other kingdoms, or, which amounts to the ſame, the peculiar characters of Chriſt, as he is a king.

1. Chriſt was not a temporal prince; his kingdom was not of this world; it differed in many reſpects from earthly kingdoms. It was not eſtabliſhed like them either by human policy, or by human force, but by a few

---

* Joh. xvii. 5. *Glorify thou me*, &c. that is, ſays *Theophylact*, τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην μου φύσιν ἄγαγε εἰς τὴν δόξαν ἣν εἶχον παρὰ σοὶ ἐγὼ Λόγος· which is preferable to the interpretation given by *Grotius*. But *Grotius* ſpeaks otherwiſe in his *Ordin. Holland. Piet.* prope init.

Εἷς Θεός ἐστιν ὁ φανερώσας ἑαυτὸν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, ὅς ἐστιν αὐτοῦ Λόγος ἀΐδιος, οὐκ ἀπὸ σιγῆς προελθών. *Ignatius* ad *Magneſ.*

a few poor, obſcure, helpleſs, illiterate perſons. It experienced ſuch an oppoſition as would infallibly deſtroy any earthly dominion: kings ſtood up and rulers took counſel together againſt it, and the wiſe and the learned joined with them, and for three hundred years, from time to time, all kind of ſubtilty and violence and inhumanity was employed to overturn it; but the more it was perſecuted, the more it flouriſhed, and at laſt prevailed over all its enemies.

It was a kingdom erected in the hearrs and over the conſciences of men. It was a kingdom which conſiſted of ſubjects who entered into it and continued in it voluntarily, and were neither encouraged nor kept in awe by thoſe methods which are moſt effectual in civil ſociety. Temporal recompences and temporal chaſtiſements were ſparingly adminiſter'd in it. At its firſt eſtabliſhment, and for a conſiderable time after, the loſs of friends and of fortunes and of life was the preſent proſpect for thoſe who ſhould enter into it, and the recompenſe was eternal happineſs after death.

2. Chriſt's kingdom was to extend itſelf over all nations, and to differ in this from

human empires which had indeed been called univerſal monarchies, and whoſe kings and emperors had ſtiled themſelves Lords of the world, but had no juſt pretenſions to ſuch titles. Chriſt declares that all power was given to him in heaven and earth, that all things were delivered to him of his Father; and St. *Paul*, that at his name all ſhould bow in heaven and earth. His kingdom then is univerſal, and all creatures are, or ought to be his ſubjects, all the inhabitants of heaven, and all mankind. Therefore they who ſerve and obey him are to be conſidered as his dutiful ſubjects, they to whom he is preached, and who reject his Goſpel, are his rebellious ſubjects, they who receive his religion but live not according to it, are his diſobedient and ſinful ſubjects, and they who never had opportunities of hearing and learning it are to be conſidered as his ignorant ſubjects, who know not their true Lord nor maſter; for he has a right to rule over them all, and in that ſenſe is univerſal King.

But the number of thoſe who ſhould profeſs themſelves to be, and who ſhould indeed be his ſervants, is repreſented by the Prophets as exceeding great.

All nations, ſay the Prophets, *and many people ſhall go and ſay, Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the houſe of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways and we will walk in his paths.——There ſhall be a root of Jeſſe, to it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek.—All the ends of the world ſhall remember and turn unto the Lord, and the kindreds of the nations ſhall worſhip before thee.—All nations whom thou haſt made ſhall come and worſhip before thee, O Lord, and ſhall glorify thy name.—Behold my ſervant—in whom my ſoul delighteth—he ſhall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.——I will give thee for a covenant to the people, for a light to the Gentiles. It is a light thing that thou ſhouldſt be my ſervant to raiſe up the tribes of Jacob, and to reſtore the preſerved of Iſrael: I will alſo give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayſt be my ſalvation unto the ends of the earth.—The earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the ſea.—From the riſing of the ſun even unto the going down of the ſame my name ſhall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incenſe* *ſhall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name ſhall be great among the Heathen, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* — *I ſaw,* ſays Daniel, *and behold one like the ſon of man,—and there was given unto him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages ſhould ſerve him: his dominion is an everlaſting dominion which ſhall not paſs away, and his kingdom that which ſhall not be deſtroyed.*

Thus it was foretold of Chriſt, in general, that he ſhould rule over all things; in particular, that he ſhould have the throne of *David*, and rule over the houſe of *Jacob*.

3. Chriſt is called *a righteous branch*, and *the Lord our righteouſneſs*; he is alſo called *the Prince of peace*. His kingdom was to be a kingdom of righteouſneſs; piety and virtue were to flouriſh in his dominions; his kingdom was to be a kingdom of peace, as it ſhould be eſtabliſhed without war and bloodſhed, and as his ſubjects ſhould be quiet and peaceable. *Iſaiah* ſays of the converted multitudes; *they ſhall beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares, and their ſpears into pruning-hooks: nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt*

againſt nation, neither ſhall they learn war any more.

And again, deſcribing the amazing change that ſhould be wrought in ſavage and cruel nations, he compares them to the wildeſt and fierceſt beaſts putting off their nature and becoming tame and gentle. *The wolf ſhall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard ſhall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child ſhall feed them; and the cow and the bear ſhall feed, their young ones ſhall lie down together, and the lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the ox; and the ſucking child ſhall play on the hole of the aſp.—They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain.*

Concerning the completion of theſe prophecies there ariſes a difficulty, when we compare the predictions with the event. The objections I ſhall endeavour to ſtate fairly, though in few words, and then proceed to the anſwer, to the ſolution of them.

The Prophets, as we have ſeen, deſcribe the kingdom of Chriſt, firſt as extending in ſome ſenſe over all people, and ſpreading itſelf through the earth; ſecondly, as comprehending in it the *Jewiſh* nation; and thirdly as a kingdom of concord and righteouſneſs. But, firſt, there have always been, and there are now many great nations who make no part of the kingdom of Chriſt; ſecondly, the *Jews* continue in their unbelief, and our Lord has no ſubjects amongſt them; thirdly, there have been continual wars, perſecutions, religious controverſies, and wickedneſs in the Chriſtian world.

To all which it may be anſwered;

It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the holy Spirit of God, who inſpired the Prophets, gave them a view of the kingdom of Chriſt, in general, from its eſtabliſhment to the end of the world; and that they were led to repreſent it in their prophecies as it ſhould be in its full luſtre, in its higheſt degree of beauty and perfection; it is no leſs reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the time is not yet arrived when his kingdom ſhall be in its moſt glorious ſtate. It is therefore not to be accounted ſtrange if the preſent condition of Chriſtianity falls ſhort of thoſe great and magnificent repreſentations contained in the prophecies.

But though theſe predictions have not yet received their entire completion, yet a great part of them has been remarkably and illuſtriouſly fulfilled.

Thus, though all nations of the earth have not embraced the Goſpel, which event ſome prophecies, interpreted literally, promiſe and declare, yet its progreſs has been as wide as its beginnings were ſmall, ſo that according to the common way of ſpeaking, we may juſtly ſay that its ſound has gone out to the ends of the world, and that it has overſpread the earth.

The firſt partial accompliſhment of the prophecies concerning the propagation of the Goſpel began in the days of the Apoſtles, when multitudes of *Jews* and *Gentiles* were converted in *Judæa* and its neighbourhood, in *Greece*, in the leſſer *Aſia*, in *Italy*, when amongſt them there were ſome who had been enemies to Chriſt and to his church, and ſome of eminent rank and abilities, when theſe perſons laying aſide their mutual hatred and contempt, their ſuperſtitions and idolatries, their vices and debaucheries, lived in peace and friendſhip, and were illuſtrious examples of piety and virtue.

Chriſtianity thus eſtabliſhed, continually increaſed, and multitudes of believers were added amongſt the *Ægyptians*, *Aſſyrians*, *Arabians*, *Greeks*, *Italians*, *Spaniards*, *Gauls*, and other people.

The ſecond accompliſhment began in the days of *Conſtantine*, when the *Roman* Emperors became Chriſtian, and the empire by degrees followed their example.

The third began ſome time after, when many nations which were ignorant, barbarous and fierce, and might well be deſcribed by the Prophets as lions, bears, and wolves, received the Goſpel, ſome ſooner and ſome later, * as the *Goths*, the *Vandals*, the *Germans*, the *Engliſh*, the *Scots*, the *Saxons*, the *Bohemians*, the *Hungarians*, the *Poles*, the *Muſcovites*, and many other people.

Secondly; the objection that our Saviour ſhould have at preſent no ſubjects amongſt the *Jews*, may perhaps be thus removed.

By the miniſtry of the Apoſtles a great multitude of *Jews* were converted to the faith, not only at *Jeruſalem* and in *Palæſtine*, but in all thoſe various and remote regions where the twelve tribes were ſcattered abroad. † Theſe *Jews* retained a great regard for the Law, and obſerved it along with the Goſpel for a conſiderable time; but after the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and the calamities which befel the nation, firſt under *Veſpaſian*, and afterwards under *Adrian*, theſe *Jewiſh* Chriſtians, partly through diſuſe of the ceremonial Law, and partly through marriages with Chriſtians of *Gentile* extraction, may be ſuppoſed to have been ſo mixed with them, that they loſt all national diſtinction; which to them was indeed no loſs at all, but a deſirable thing. Their poſterity therefore are now * ſubjects to Chriſt, though under the common denomination of Chriſtians.

---

* Franci, Germani, Alemanni, Saxones, Vandali, Hungari, Bohæmi, Poloni, Gothi, Angli, Friſii, Longobardi, Bulgari, Moſci, &c.

Thirdly, as to the wars and vices of Chriſtians, theſe anſwers may be made.

It is extremely evident that the precepts of Chriſtianity are calculated to promote peace and virtue. Therefore, according to the common ſtyle of Scripture, the Goſpel may be ſaid to have brought peace and virtue, † becauſe it has brought every thing that is neceſſary to produce them.

---

† Many Jews of *Crete* embraced Chriſtianity in the fifth Century. *Socrates* E. H. VII. 38.

* *Grotius* on *Rev.* xi. 15. obſerves that Chriſt may be ſaid to rule over the *Jews* for ever, becauſe *ſemper erit in Judæâ Chriſtiana religio. Quod verum fuit primùm ſub Paganis Imperatoribus, multo magis ſub Chriſtianis, ſed et ſub Sarracenis et Turcis in hunc diem.* I take the ſolution which I have propoſed to be more probable; though I reject not his.

The ſtyle of the prophets is poetical, lively, and lofty; and therefore their magnificent deſcriptions of the happineſs and piety which ſhould adorn the reign of the Meſſias may be reſtrained and underſtood in a ſenſe ſomewhat lower than the words ſtrictly import.

The doctrines of the Goſpel have undoubtedly produced at all times good effects in the minds of many Chriſtians, who are peaceable and charitable, and ready to ſhew kindneſs to all men, in their private capacities, as far as the laws and public intereſts of their reſpective kingdoms and ſocieties permit.

Chriſtianity has made a happy alteration in thoſe nations who have embraced it, nor have they that fierceneſs and barbarity which they had when they were *Pagan*.

---

† Vid. *Grot.* de Jure B. I. II. §. 8.

The [*] benefits which Chriſtianity has brought to thoſe nations which have received it, are in many reſpects greater than we uſually imagine.

In the *Gentile* world men were looſe and unſettled in their principles; hence it came to paſs that impurities of all ſorts were ſcarce reckoned faults amongſt them, that they made no ſcruple of [‡] expoſing infants, that they were cruel and inhuman towards [†] ſlaves and priſoners, and that they had public ſhews, in which men were obliged to fight with wild beaſts, and to murder each other for the entertainment of the aſſembly. The *Romans* were exceſſively fond

---

[*] See what *Euſebius* has ſaid upon this ſubject, *Præp. Evang.* I. 4.

[‡] See *Gerard Noodt* Julius Paulus, ſive de Partus Expoſitione, &c. It is condemn'd as a kind of murder, *Digeſt.* L. XXV. *Tit.* III. 4. *Cod.* L. VIII. *Tit.* LII. 2. *Novell.* CLIII.

[†] The *Romans*, who kept a multitude of ſlaves, often neglected them moſt inhumanly when they were ſick, turned them out of doors, and ſent them to the Iſland in the *Tiber*, where they left them to be cured by the God *Æſculapius* who had a temple there. The Emperor *Claudius* decreed that the ſlaves thus turned out ſhould have their liberty if they recovered. And becauſe ſome maſters were ſo cruel that they killed them when they were ſick, he ordered that they who did ſo ſhould be puniſhed as murderers. *Sueton.* Claud. 25. *Dio* LX. p. 685. *Cod.* L. vii. *Tit.* vi. *Adrian* wiſely took away the power of life and death, which maſters exerciſed over them. *Adr.* in *Hiſt. Aug. Script.* c. 18. p. 169.

Laws were made or confirmed by Chriſtian Emperors in favour of ſlaves, *Inſtit.* L. i. *Tit.* viii. *Digeſt.* L. i. *Tit.* vi. 1.2. L. xlviii. *Tit.* viii. 11. *Cod.* L. ii. *Tit.* lix. L. ix. *Tit.* xiv. 1. *Novell.* xxii. 8. &c. &c. But ſlaves were ſtill expoſed to injuries and to cruel uſage, as appears from many laws *de ſervis torquendis* and *de quæſtionibus.*

The condition of ſlaves has ever been deplorable, and far worſe than of the beaſts. See how it is deſcribed by *Pignorius* de ſervis. *Cato* the elder, ſo much celebrated by the *Romans*, was a bad maſter to his ſlaves, and is juſtly cenſured on that account by *Plutarch*, in *Vit. Caton.* By the *Roman* laws a ſlave could not bear teſtimony without undergoing the rack. By the ſame laws, if a man were killed in his own houſe, all his domeſtic ſlaves were to be put to death though their innocence were ever ſo evident. *Tacitus* Annal. XIV. 42. See *Digeſt.* L. xxix. *Tit.* v. L. xxxv. *Tit.* xi.

Servi ſunt? imo homines. Servi ſunt? imo contubernales. Servi ſunt? imo humiles amici. Servi ſunt? imo conſervi, ſi cogitaveris tantundem in utroſque licere Fortunæ, &c. *Seneca* Epiſt. 47. See the reſt.

Germanicus Cæſar Tacito narratur vicos Marſorum ferro flammiſque pervaſtaſſe, additurque: *non ſexus, non ætas miſerationem attulit.* Titus Judæorum etiam pueros et feminas in ſpectaculo feris laniandos propoſuit. Et tamen hi duo ingenio minime ſævo fuiſſe creduntur: adeo ſævitia illa in morem verterat. *Grotius* de Jure B. iii. iv. 9. &c. &c.

Chriſtianis in univerſum placuit bello inter ipſos orto captos ſervos non fieri.—Atque hoc a majoribus ad poſteros pridem tranſof this abominable diverſion, and ſcarce can any writer amongſt them be found who has declared a diſapprobation of it, except *Seneca* * the philoſopher.

Chriſti-

---

tranſiiſſe inter eos, qui eandem religionem profiterentur, ſcripſit Gregoras, nec eorum fuiſſe proprium qui ſub Romano imperio viverent, ſed commune cum Theſſalis, Illyriis, Triballis; et Bulgaris. Atque ita hoc ſaltem, quamquam exiguum eſt, perfecit reverentia Chriſtianæ legis, quod cum Græcis inter ſe ſervandum olim diceret Socrates, nihil impetraverat. Quod autem hac in parte Chriſtiani, idem et Mahumetiſtæ inter ſe ſervant. *Grotius* de Jure B. iii. vii. 9.

* Caſu in meridianum ſpectaculum incidi, luſus expectans et aliquid laxamenti, quo hominum oculi ab humano cruore acquieſcant. Contra eſt. Quicquid ante pugnatum eſt, miſericordia fuit. Nunc omiſſis nugis, mera homicidia ſunt; nihil habent quo tegantur —— Sed latrocinium fecit aliquis: quid ergo meruit? ut ſuſpendatur. Occidit hominem. Qui occidit, ille meruit ut hoc pateretur: tu quid meruiſti miſer, ut hoc ſpectes? *Seneca*, Epiſt. 7.

Homo, ſacra res, homo, jam per luſum et jocum occiditur: et quem erudiri ad accipienda inferendaque vulnera nefas erat, is jam nudus inermiſque producitur, ſatiſque ſpectaculi in homine mors eſt. *Idem*. Epiſt. 95.

There were ſome in the time of *Cicero*, and probably they were *Greeks*, not *Romans*, who condemned this barbarity, amongſt whom I wiſh I could place *Cicero* himſelf: he ſays, *Crudele gladiatorum ſpectaculum et inhumanum nonnullis videri ſolet: et haud ſcio an ita ſit, ut nunc ſit: cum vero ſontes ferro depugnabant, auribus fortaſſe multæ, oculis quidem nulla poterat eſſe fortior contra dolorem et mortem diſciplina.* Tuſc. Diſp. II. 16.

The

Chriſtianity has in no ſmall meaſure removed theſe enormities.

Chriſtianity has aboliſhed polygamy, and in a great degree * ſlavery, and thereby has made the condition of millions far more eaſy than it would elſe have been.

The Emperor *Marcus Aurelius*, ſays *Dio*, ſo much diſliked blood-ſhed and ſlaughter, that he ordered the Gladiators at *Rome* to fight with foils, or blunted weapons; Μάρκος γε μὴν οὕτω τι φόνοις οὐκ ἔχαιρεν, ὥστε καὶ τοὺς μονομάχους ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ ὥσπερ ἀθλητὰς ἀκινδύνως ἑώρα μαχομένους· σιδήρειον γὰρ οὐδέποτε οὐδενὶ αὐτῶν ὀξὺ ἔδωκεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀμβλέσιν, ὥσπερ ἐσφαιρωμένοις, πάντες ἐμάχοντο.

To theſe we may add the *Greek* philoſopher *Demonax*, who, when the *Athenians* were deliberating whether they ſhould have Gladiators as well as the *Corinthians*, adviſed them not to vote for it, till they had pulled down the Altar of *Mercy*.

Ἀθηναίων σκεπτομένων κατὰ ζῆλον τὸν πρὸς Κορινθίους καταστήσασθαι θέαν μονομάχων, προσελθὼν εἰς αὐτούς, Μὴ πρότερον, ἔφη, ταῦτα, ὦ Ἀθηναῖοι, ψηφίσεσθε, ἂν μὴ τοῦ Ἐλέου τὸν βωμὸν καθέλητε. *Lucian* Demon.

It was a long time before Chriſtianity could get the better of this cuſtom. *Conſtantine* made a law againſt it, *Cod.* L. xi. *Tit.* xliii. but it crept in again, and *Honorius* aboliſhed it *A. D.* 403.

* The Goſpel has not ſaid indeed that it is unlawful to have ſlaves, but by its mild genius and temper it ſeems by degrees to have expell'd this tyranny from Chriſtian kingdoms. Many laws were made by Chriſtian Emperors which muſt have continually releaſed multitudes from ſlavery. It would be endleſs to cite them. See *Inſtit.* L. i. *Tit.* v. & vii.

It has † had ſome influence upon the civil laws of nations, and made them in ſeveral ‡ reſpects more gentle * and merciful.

It

---

† Leges Romanæ duriores erant, quam lenitas Chriſtiana patiatur. *Grotius* de Jure B. I. II. §. X. 4.

‡ We muſt except ſome laws againſt Jews and Pagans, and particularly ſome laws againſt Heretics in the *Theodoſian* and *Juſtinianean Code*, and in the *Novellæ*, and in *Leo*'s *Conſtit.* for which no excuſe can be made. All that we can ſay is, that perhaps they were ſeldom rigorouſly executed, and that ſome of them were often overlooked.

* Thus, *Conſtantine* aboliſhed the cruel puniſhment of crucifixion and of breaking the legs, and of marking the face with a hot iron.

He forbad to ſeize upon men's ſervants and cattle for the payment of taxes, and to put ſuch debtors in common jayls, or to beat them.

He ordered that priſoners ſhould be well uſed and conveniently lodged, and made laws in favour of ſlaves, and againſt exceſſive uſury.

Si quis, ſays he, *in orbe Romano eunuchos fecerit, capite puniatur*, Cod. L. iv. Tit. xlii. 1. See alſo *Novell.* cxlii. and *Leonis Conſtit.* lx. Pagan Emperors had made laws againſt it. *Digeſt.* L. xlviii. *Tit.* viii. 3. 4. 6.

Valentinian I. made laws to releaſe priſoners, not guilty of capital crimes, at *Eaſter*; and other Emperors did the ſame afterwards.

He ordered phyſicians to be appointed, with ſalaries, who ſhould take care of the poor at *Rome*.

Gratian made a law, that thoſe women, whoſe birth and condition obliged them to appear upon the ſtage, ſhould not be compell'd to it, if they were Chriſtians.

Alſo that perſons condemned to die ſhould have thirty days reſpite. *Theodoſius* confirmed this law.

Theodoſius

It has been the cause of many public charities, and has provided for the educa-

tion

Theodoſius I. made laws in favour of the fortunes and families of condemned perſons, and of thoſe who had found a treaſure. *Adrian* and *Nerva* had done the latter. See *Inſtit.* L. ii. *Tit.* i. 39. and *Philoſtratus* de vit. Sophiſt. 27.

Forbad that girls ſhould be brought up minſtrels, *tibicinæ*.

Made a law concerning wills, which greatly favoured the natural heirs againſt his own intereſt.

Made a law, that if any perſon, forgetting all modeſty and decency, ſhould revile the Emperor, and cenſure his conduct, he ſhould not be called to account for it, nor ſuffer the puniſhment which uſed to be inflicted on ſuch offenders.

Made a law againſt an infamous way of puniſhing women convicted of adultery, who had been compelled to be common proſtitutes, if *Socrates* be not miſtaken, *Hiſt. Eccl.* V. 18. See the place, But I agree with *Valeſius*, who ſays, *Vix crediderim Romanos eâ pœnâ affeciſſe mulieres adulteras*, &c.

Ordered that all who in their infancy had been ſold for ſlaves ſhould be ſet at liberty, many of whom belonged to the Emperor.

Honorius made a very merciful law in favour of priſoners.

Theſe laws may be found in the *Theod. Code*, or ſee *Juſtinian*'s *Code*, L. i. *Tit.* iv. 3. 9. 12. 14. 22. 23. 24. 33. *Tit.* xii. 3. L. ix. *Tit.* iii. 2. *Tit.* iv. 1. 2. &c. *Tit.* vii. L. v. *Tit.* iv. 28. 29. L. vi. *Tit.* xxiii. 20. *Tit.* xxxv. 12. *Tit.* li. L. ix. *Tit.* iii. 2. *Tit.* iv. 1. 2. 3. 6. *Tit.* v. i. *Tit.* vii. *Tit.* xlvii. 17. 20. 22. 23. 26. *Tit.* xlix. 10. L. x. *Tit.* xv. *Tit.* xix. 2. *Novell.* xiv. 1. xvii. 12. xxii. 8. xxxii. 1. xxxiii. 1. cxxxiv. 13. de pœnarum omnium moderatione. *Leonis Conſtit.* li.

§ I find in profane hiſtory ſomething like charity-ſchools, or a proviſion made for poor children by Emperors or other

perſons

tion of the ignorant, and for the relief of the ſick and needy.

It has given men a clearer knowledge of God and of morality and of a future ſtate. Hence it comes to paſs that the far greater part of Chriſtians, when they do amiſs, ſin againſt conſcience, and feel many reſtraints and checks, by which they are at leaſt kept

---

perſons of diſtinction, or by the public; by *Nerva,* [*Aurel. Victor.*] by *Trajan.* [*Plin.* Paneg. *Dio* LXVIII. 771.] by *Adrian,* [*Spartian.* in *Hiſt. Aug.*] by *T. Antoninus,* [*Capitolin.* in *Hiſt. Aug*] by *Pliny* the younger, perhaps, [*Epiſt.* I. 8. VII. 18.] *Conſtantine,* who was a very generous prince, did as much, and more. *Cod. Theodoſ.* L. ii. t. 27. l. 1. *Orphanotrophia, gerontocomia, ptochotrophia, noſocomia, brephotrophia,* &c. are frequently mentioned in the *Code* and the *Novellæ,* and laws were made in favour of ſuch houſes, and of thoſe who preſided over them. The Emperor *Julian,* amongſt the many ſchemes which he formed for the deſtruction of our religion, purpoſed to introduce into Paganiſm what he judged to be moſt commendable in Chriſtianity, as ſchools for moral lectures, preachers and readers in the temples, forms of prayer, hoſpitals for the reception of ſtrangers, of the ſick and helpleſs, collections for the poor, recommendatory letters for travellers, &c. *Greg. Nazianz.* Orat. iii. *Julian.* Fragm. & Epiſt. 49. *Sozomen* H.E. v. 16. If *Julian*'s project had taken place, the Pagans would have imitated the Chriſtians very awkwardly, as monkeys mimick men.

from ſome crimes which they elſe would have committed, and incited to do ſome good actions which they would not have performed.

Several of theſe benefits are more evidently viſible in ſome Chriſtian * countries than in others, but they are to be found in ſome meaſure in all nations where the Goſpel is received.

The Goſpel for ſeveral ages after its eſtabliſhment was of ſome † benefit even to thoſe who received it not; for the *Pagan* philoſophers ‡ and learned men in thoſe times were improved in their notions of morality and religion; for which we can account no way ſo probably as from their intercourſe and converſation and debates with Chriſtians.

---

[*] The Church of Chriſt here upon earth, in a true ſenſe, is the whole number of all thoſe in all places, who believe in Chriſt, and endeavour to know his will and obey his laws. Every perſon who is in ſuch a diſpoſition of mind, is a member of the univerſal Church, and as ſuch, a Chriſtian.

[†] *Whitb.* on 1 *Cor.* xv. 44.

[‡] See the Diſc. on the Goſpel as it is grace and truth.

The Goſpel has likewiſe been in ſome meaſure ſerviceable to thoſe great and populous nations who are Mohammedan; for their religion, falſe and fooliſh as it is, § borrows ſeveral things from *Judaiſm* and Chriſtianity; it teaches the belief of one God

§ Juſtice requires of us to give every one his due, and *αἰνεῖν αἰνητὰ*, to commend what is commendable, whereſoever we find it. It ſhould be acknowledged that the falſe Prophet, in his Coran, requires the belief of one God, truſt in him, frequent prayer and faſting, alms-giving even to ſtrangers, keeping of covenants, juſtice in dealings, patience in adverſity, to honour father and mother, and to maintain them if they are old and poor; that he forbids uſury, bearing falſe witneſs, profane ſwearing by the name of God, and the murdering of infants which had been common in *Arabia*.

But Mohammediſm is a religion deſtitute of all proper evidence, and liable to inſuperable objections.

Mohammed has ſufficiently confuted himſelf by ſtriking out ſome paſſages of the Coran, upon ſecond thoughts, and when his exigences required it, ſaying, *In the name of God, whatever verſe we ſhall abrogate*, &c. ch. II. p. 14. and ch. XIV. p. 223. *Sale*'s Edit.

The 23d chapter ſhews him to be an impoſtor.

His invention was very poor and narrow. If the repetitions were blotted out, not more than a fourth part of his book would be left.

In ſome paſſages of the Coran he denies a poſſibility of ſalvation to thoſe who reject it; in other places he is thought by ſome to have left room for virtuous men who believed a God and a future ſtate. See ch. II. p. 8. and the notes; and *Fabricius* Luc. Evang. p. 491.

maker of heaven and earth, and of a providence, and of a future ſtate. Therefore it is better than *Epicurean* notions of the mortality of the ſoul, and of a God who takes no care of the world, it is better than *Pagan* idolatry, than the worſhip of Dæmons, of falſe Gods, of ſtocks and ſtones.

4. It is propheſied of Chriſt that he ſhould be a conqueror, a proſperous and victorious king, who ſhould ſubdue all his enemies. To him, as he is a king, belongs the right of judging and puniſhing thoſe who rebel againſt him, and refuſe to ſubmit to him. Kings in ancient times were alſo judges, and in Scripture are called judges of the earth. And of the Meſſias it is ſaid, that he ſhould judge with righteouſneſs, that he ſhould ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and ſlay the wicked, that his enemies ſhould lick the duſt, that he ſhould break in pieces the oppreſſor, that kings ſhould periſh, if he was angry with them, and that he ſhould ſmite in ſunder their heads over divers countries; and many like acts of power are aſcribed to him. In the New Teſtament alſo our Saviour, under ſome parables, repreſents himſelf as a king,

who ſhould deſtroy his enemies, and declares that all judgment is committed to him by his Father.

Many of theſe acts of regal authority have had their ſignal completion; for,

Firſt; Chriſt puniſhed *Judæa* with utter deſolation. His rebellious ſubjects there, who would not that he ſhould reign over them, were given up to a reprobate mind, to blindneſs and madneſs, and by their own outrageous iniquity, by civil diſcord, by famine, by war with the *Romans*, ſuffered *calamities not to be equalled in the † hiſtory of any other people; their city and temple were deſtroyed, and thoſe of them who ſurvived were ſcattered into all lands.

After this, the *Jews* of *Libya*, *Ægypt*, *Cyprus*, and *Meſopotamia* rebelled, and ſlew an innumerable multitude of people, for which they were ſeverely puniſhed by *Trajan*.

---

* Before this, in the time of *Caius*, a ſlaughter was made of the *Jews* in *Ægypt*, *Meſopotamia*, *Babylon*, *Syria*, and *Seleucia*, which was, ſays *Joſephus*, φόνος πολὺς, καὶ ὁπόσος οὐκ ἱστορημένος πρότερον, a greater deſtruction than any that was ever before recorded of them. *Ant*. XVIII. 9.

† Theſe calamities were not confined to *Palæſtine*, but reached them in all places where they dwelt, as in *Ægypt*, *Syria*, &c.

After this, when [*] the *Jews* began to gather and to ſettle once again in *Jeruſalem*, they drew upon themſelves the arms of the Emperor *Adrian*, and, if we may believe [†] their own writers, they ſuffered calamities not leſs ſevere and extenſive than the former.

In the time of *Conſtantius* they [‡] rebelled again, and *Gallus* ſlew many thouſands of them, not ſparing even the children, and burnt *Diocæſarea*, *Tiberias*, *Dioſpolis*, and other towns of the *Jews*.

After this the Emperor *Julian*, in hatred to the Chriſtian religion, would have ſettled them in *Jeruſalem*, and reſtored to them their temple; but all his attempts were fruſtrated in a miraculous manner by Divine Providence.

After this, in later times, Chriſtian princes entertained a deſign to deliver the holy land from the infidels, and many attempts of that kind were made, which God would not ſuffer to proſper; but *Judæa* lies to this day barren, uncultivated, thinly inhabited, a memorable and dreadful example of Divine juſtice.

---

[*] *Euſebius* E. H. IV. 2. 6. & *Valeſius*; & *Fabric.* Luc. Evang. p. 124, &c.

[†] *Buxtorf* in vocibus *Bitter*, *Barchoziba*.

[‡] *Hieron.* in *Chron. ann.* 355. *Socrat.* Hiſt. Eccl. II. 33. *Sozom.* IV. 7.

Secondly, it has been a common opinion that our Saviour puniſhed the *Roman* Empire, that great adverſary and oppreſſor of Chriſtianity, that cruel perſecutor of his Church, that empire of Satan. Thus much is certain, that moſt of the perſecuting Emperors were cut off one after another in a * very remarkable manner, and that the Empire was viſited with plague and famine, with civil wars, with inundations of ſavage and barbarous people, *Perſians*, *Goths*, *Germans*, *Scythians*, &c. till all *Italy* and † *Rome* itſelf fell into their hands and was plundered by them.

---

* See Grotius *Append. de Antichr.* p. 499. and the writer *de Mortib. Perſecut.*

† However it muſt be confeſſed that *Rome* at that time was Chriſtian, and under Chriſtian Emperors. *Joſ. Mede* has taken notice of this, and ſays; *Although the Roman Emperors were now become Chriſtians, yet would not God forget their former ſlaughters of his ſervants, but require their blood at the hand of that empire.* p. 919. *Nec eſt*, ſays Grotius, *quod quiſquam opponat tunc Romam fuiſſe Chriſtianam. Contrà*

Theſe acts of regal authority Chriſt has executed. Some remain, which in their due ſeaſon will be accompliſhed; for it is generally ſuppoſed that the prophets ſpeak of a time when the *Jews* ſhall be converted, and the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* ſhall flow into the Church, and the kingdoms of the world ſhall be the kingdoms of Chriſt, when the Goſpel ſhall be farther ſpread, and better underſtood, and more religiouſly obſerved than it is at preſent. And without queſtion, theſe great events will be attended with as great and conſpicuons acts of Chriſt's royal power and majeſty.

But the moſt illuſtrious act of royal authority which Chriſt will exerciſe, will be at the end of all things, when he will judge the world in the trueſt and largeſt ſenſe; when this ſinful earth, the ſeat of folly and

---

enim verum eſt, etiam poſtquam Imperatores facti erant Chriſtiani, Romæ manſiſſe idololatriam tum in Senatu, tum in plebe. ad *Apocal.* XVII. 16. See alſo *Hammond* there, and Grotius *Append. de Antichr.* p. 501.

Add to theſe the following obſervation; *Scribere enim diſpoſui —— quomodo et per quos Chriſti Eccleſia nata ſit et adulta, perſecutionibus creverit, —— et poſtquam ad Chriſtianos principes venerit, potentiâ quidem et divitiis major, virtutibus minor facta ſit.* Hieronymus *in vitâ S. Malchi.*

iniquity, ſhall be ſet on fire and conſume away before his preſence, when he will paſs ſentence on the evil Angels, when he will raiſe up the dead, and diſtribute rewards and puniſhments to all; proportionably to their behaviour in the days of their mortality.

Thus are we come to the moſt glorious part of Chriſt's reign, and alſo to the concluſion of it. It is ſaid, by the Angel, that he ſhould reign for ever, and of his kingdom there ſhould be no end; and the Angel's words are taken from *Iſaiah*, who propheſying of the Meſſias, ſays; *Of the increaſe of his government and peace there ſhall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with judgment and with juſtice, from henceforth even for ever. Daniel* ſpeaks in the ſame manner: *His dominion is an everlaſting dominion, which ſhall not paſs away, and his kingdom that which ſhall not be deſtroyed.* And again: *The God of heaven ſhall ſet up a kingdom which ſhall never be deſtroyed, and it ſhall ſtand for ever.* In this alſo Chriſt's kingdom was to differ from all other kingdoms, from all the preceding human monarchies,

narchies, which when they had arrived to their full ſtrength and glory, had the ſame fate which attends human bodies, and either were quickly deſtroyed by violent cauſes, or inſenſibly decayed and moulder'd away, ſo that no tokens of them would have remained, if Hiſtory had not written their epitaph, and told us where they lay, and what they had been.

Not ſuch was to be the fate of Chriſt's kingdom, to which the prophets, with one voice, have promiſed an eternal duration.

Yet St. *Paul* in his firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, ſays that Chriſt's kingdom ſhall have an end. To reconcile which with the prophecies, we muſt obſerve that the expreſſions, * *everlaſting*, *for ever*, and *without end*, are uſed by ſacred, as well as prophane authors, in different ſenſes, according to the ſubject to which they are applied. When therefore it is ſaid that Chriſt ſhall reign for ever, † the meaning ſeems to be that he ſhall reign as long as the world laſts; when it is ſaid that of his kingdom there ſhall be no end, the meaning is that it ſhall not paſs away like other kingdoms, and that there ſhall be no end of it, till the conſummation of all things.

---

* See *Vitringa* in *Iſai.* Vol. II. p. 220. *Grotius* de Ver. R. C. V. 7. *Blackwall* Sacr. Claſs. p. 149. *Clarke* Serm. IV. Vol. I. The comparative degree ἀθανατώτερος is uſed by *Plato* in his *Phædo*, and *Sympoſ.*

Then cometh the end, ſays St. Paul, *when* Chriſt *ſhall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father, when he ſhall have put down all rule, and all authority and power; for he muſt reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The laſt enemy which ſhall be deſtroyed is death. And when all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*

Chriſt will then have no more enemies to ſubdue, when death ſhall be deſtroyed, and ſin ſhall receive its due correction: he will have no more occaſion to protect and to reward his ſervants, when he has raiſed them up to eternal life, and given them ſeats in his kingdom of heaven. * Theſe acts therefore of regal authority he can exerciſe no longer.

---

† In like manner it is ſaid of Chriſt, that he is *a Prieſt for ever*, and *hath an unchangeable prieſthood.* Heb. vii. that is, he is a prieſt, as long as the office can ſubſiſt; as long as there are men for whom he may intercede, and whom he may reconcile to God, as long as the world endures.

But ſince Chriſt is to all his faithful ſervants, not only a creator, but a guide and a teacher, a ſaviour and a mediator, a king and a judge, the benefits received from theſe relations which Chriſt bears to them are of an endleſs nature; and an eternal obligation will lie upon them to offer up to him the juſt returns of love and gratitude, of reverence and adoration, through all ages; according to thoſe forms of thankſgiving in the Revelation. *Bleſſing and honour and glory and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.—Unto him that loved us and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and prieſts unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

We are taught to pray daily that the kingdom of God, or of Chriſt, may come;

---

* See *Whitby* on II. *Tim.* iv. 1.

in which words we pray that the Goſpel of Chriſt may flouriſh more and more, and that the number of his ſervants may increaſe continually. But to pray for this is not enough; we cannot indeed pray for it with any ſincerity, unleſs we uſe our beſt endeavours to accompliſh theſe pious wiſhes.

Setting aſide the injudicious, inhuman, and infamous methods, by which too many have pretended to do God ſervice, we ſhall find that there remain only the following ways by which we may promote the enlargement of our Lord's kingdom; and they are ways in which every Chriſtian, more or leſs, is capable of performing his part.

Firſt, an endeavour to underſtand the Goſpel, that we may be able to teach thoſe who are committed to our care and placed under our authority; to remove the doubts of the unſtable; to diſpel the errors of the miſtaken; and to anſwer the objections of adverſaries.

Secondly, a readineſs to countenance and aſſiſt any attempt which is made to propagate the Goſpel, or to inſtruct the young, the poor, and the ignorant, when we have reaſon to hope that they ſhall be inſtructed in the religion of Chriſt, not in fanaticiſm and enthuſiaſm.

Thirdly, * a diſpoſition to think and ſpeak favourably of thoſe who believe in the ſame Lord and Maſter with us, though their belief be not exactly conformable to ours, eſpecially when they think and ſpeak favourably of us.

Fourthly, rational notions of the Goſpel, which will teach us to repreſent it as a religion in which all things † neceſſary to be believed or done are delivered with ſuffi- cient

---

* *Taylor*, Libert. of Proph.

† Πάντα τὰ ἀναγκαῖα δῆλα· *Chryſoſt.* Hom. 36. in I ad Cor.

Non multum tibi nocebit tranſiſſe quæ nec licet ſcire, nec prodeſt. Involuta veritas in alto latet. Nec de malignitate Naturæ queri poſſumus: quia nullius rei difficilis inventio eſt, niſi cujus hic unus inventæ fructus eſt, inveniſſe. Quicquid nos meliores beatoſque facturum eſt, aut in aperto, aut in proximo poſuit. *Seneca* de Benef. VII. 1.

Ne curioſus quære cauſſas omnium,
Quæcunque libris vis Prophetarum indidit
Afflata cœlo, plena veraci Deo:
Nec operta ſacri ſupparo ſilentii
Irrumpere aude, ſed prudenter præteri.
Neſcire velle, quæ Magiſter optimus
Docere non vult, erudita inſcitia eſt.

Joſ. Scaliger.

See *Whitby* on *Acts* viii. 21. *Tit.* i. 2.

cient clearneſs, as a religion which conſiſts principally in purity of heart, in morality, in goodneſs, in righteouſneſs, in the love of God and of mankind, as a religion in which charity takes the upper hand of faith and hope and knowledge, and is the moſt excellent of all accompliſhments.

Laſtly, a life conformable to the religion which we profeſs, which would do more towards recommending our Chriſtian faith to the bulk of mankind, than all that we can ſay in behalf of it. The want of this has been an impediment to the progreſs of Chriſtianity, a ſcandal and a ſtumbling-block in the way of unbelievers.

They object to us, that ſince we ſay and do not, either our religion is impracticable, or we believe nothing of it, and by our behaviour acknowledge it to be falſe.

To which we might make more than one reply;

We might ſay that the heart and the underſtanding of man are frequently at variance, that he often acts contrary to his judgment and conſcience; and therefore it muſt not be haſtily concluded that he rejects the doctrines which he does not practiſe.

We might ſay that every age which has paſſed ſince our Saviour's time, eſpecially the earlieſt ages of the Church, has afforded eminent examples of Chriſtian piety.

We might ſay that religion is what it is in itſelf; muſt ſtand, if it ſtands, by its own intrinſic merit, and by the evidence which accompanies it; that its truth and value is no more leſſened by the ill uſe which men make of it, than the ſun ceaſes to ſhine when we ſhut our eyes to his beams.

We might ſay that Chriſtianity, though it has not all the happy effects which were to be wiſhed, yet prevents and reſtrains many evils, and is the cauſe of much good in the world, as we have already ſhewed in ſeveral inſtances.

But the beſt anſwer of all would be to forſake our ſins and amend our ways; and then our good actions would ſpeak for us, and wipe off this imputation caſt upon our faith and our religion.

It was a ſingular honour and advantage to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, that its *ancient Writers, in their apologies for it, could addreſs themſelves to the *Romans* in ſuch words as theſe; We are grown ſo many in number, that if we were only to withdraw our ſelves from your dominions, we ſhould ruin you, you could not ſubſiſt without us. Yet is our innocence as remarkable as our increaſe. Your jayls ſwarm with criminals of your own religion; but you ſhall not find there one Chriſtian, unleſs he be there becauſe he is a Chriſtian, and purely on account of his faith.

Every one who believes the Goſpel, ſhould conſider himſelf as a ſubject of Chriſt's kingdom, and remember that he is not admitted into it to provide only for his own future welfare, and to neglect the intereſt of the ſociety to which he belongs. He ſhould account it his duty, his honour, and his happineſs, to increaſe the number of his fellow-ſubjects; and to this purpoſe he ſhould be ready to employ his reputation, his learning, his abilities, his authority, and his fortunes. To turn men from ſin to righteouſneſs, and to enlarge the kingdom of God upon earth, is an office of ſuch dignity and importance, that our Lord deſcended from heaven to execute it; and bleſſed is that ſervant, whom, when he cometh, he ſhall find to be, or to have been ſo occupied.

---

* Tertullian, Minucius Felix, &c.

IV.

The fitneſs of the time when Chriſt came into the world.

THERE are many prophecies in the Old Teſtament relating to the Meſſias, ſome of which point out a certain time when he ſhould appear.

It was foretold by * *Haggai* and by *Malachi* that he ſhould come whilſt the temple ſtood. It was foretold by *Daniel* that the kingdom of the Meſſias ſhould be ſet up in the time of the fourth kingdom, which was the *Roman* Empire, and that he ſhould appear about four hundred and ninety years after the rebuilding of *Jeruſalem.*

---

* ii. 9.

It may be objected that Chriſt came not whilſt the ſecond temple ſtood, but after the third temple had been built by *Herod*, and that conſequently the prophecy of *Haggai* was not accompliſhed in him. But the *Jews* always accounted *Herod*'s temple as the ſecond temple, and always called it ſo; and what *Herod* did, might well be deemed rather a repairing and improving of the ſecond temple, than the building of a third, becauſe the daily ſacrifice and the ſervice of the temple never ceaſed during the work, nor was it taken down all at once. See the Commentators on *Joſephus* Ant. XV. 11. Sect. 2. 3. and *Grotius* on *Matt.* xxiv. 1. and on *Malach.* iii. 1. and *Le Clerc* Hiſt. Eccl. p. 197.

Theſe prophecies were accompliſhed in our Saviour, who honoured the temple with his preſence, after whoſe death and according to whoſe prediction that temple was entirely deſtroyed, the *Jewiſh* Government was diſſolved, and a diſperſion of that people enſued which ſtill continues.

At the time of his appearance there was a general expectation amongſt the *Jews* of a Meſſias. In the New Teſtament mention is made of perſons who waited for the conſolation of *Iſrael*, who looked for redemption in *Jeruſalem*, who thought that the kingdom of God, or of the Meſſias, ſhould immediately appear. We find that it was the judgment of the learned alſo, of the chief prieſts and ſcribes. When *John* the Baptiſt entered into his miniſtry, the *Jews* ſent prieſts and Levites to aſk him whether he were the Chriſt.

Herod was alarmed [*] at the coming of the wiſe men, he enquired of the learned *Jews*

---

[*] St. *Matthew* ſays that at the birth of Jeſus, Herod *was troubled*, ἐταράχθη, *and all Jeruſalem with him*, ii. 3. To which the Author of the *Scheme of Lit. Proph.* objects; *How could all Jeruſalem be troubled to hear their Meſſiah, or deliverer, was born; when the Jews at all times hoped and deſired to ſee him?* &c. p. 35.

Herod and his friends, and all the irreligious *Jews*, when they heard that the Meſſias was come, ἐταράχθησαν, *were moved*, with grief and fear. The reſt of the *Jews*, who wiſhed for the Meſſias, ἐταράχθησαν, *were moved* with an anxiety made up of hopes, and fears, and uncertainty, and expectation. All therefore were put into a commotion, and had their apprehenſions and uneaſineſs, but in ſome they were mixed with hope and joy.

Phædo, in the Dialogue of *Plato* which bears his name, thus deſcribes the painful pleaſure which he felt whilſt he was converſing with *Socrates* for the laſt time —— ἀλλ' ἀτεχνῶς ἄτοπόν τι μοι πάθος παρῆν, καί τις ἀήθης κρᾶσις ἀπό τε τῆς ἡδονῆς συγκεκραμένη ὁμοῦ καὶ τῆς λύπης, ἐνθυμουμένῳ ὅτι αὐτίκα ἐκεῖνος ἔμελλε τελευτᾶν. καὶ πάντες οἱ παρόντες σχεδόν τι οὕτω διεκείμεθα, —— καὶ αὐτὸς ἔγωγε ἐτεταραγμην, καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι· *Sed affectus quidam plane mirus, atque inſolita voluptatis ſimul et doloris permixtio me invaſerat conſiderantem illi paullo poſt moriendum eſſe. Et quicunque aderamus ſimiliter ferme affecti eramus;* —— *atque ipſe aliique perturbati eramus.*

Vix ſum apud me, ita animus commotuſt metu,
Spe, gaudio, mirando hoc tanto tam repentino bono.
Terent. Andr. V. 4.

—— animo ſpem turbidus hauſit inanem.
Virgil. Æn. X. 648.

Euœ

Jews where Chriſt ſhould be born, and hearing that it ſhould be at *Bethlehem*, he deſtroyed all the male children there under a certain age, hoping to cut off the Meſſias. He is charged by *ſome, but it ſeems to be a miſtake, with burning the genealogies of all the *Jewiſh* families, that the lineage of *David*, from whom the Meſſias was to ſpring, might be unknown; and it has been ſaid that he undertook to rebuild the temple, becauſe it was thought that the Meſſias would perform that work.

A great number of impoſtors, falſe Chriſts and falſe prophets, taking advantage of this prevailing opinion, endeavoured to impoſe upon the *Jews*. Many of theſe deceivers appeared from the days of *Herod* the great to the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*.

Amongſt † the *Romans* alſo, and in the Eaſtern parts of the world there was an

' Euœ! recenti mens trepidat metu;
Plenoque Bacchi pectore turbidum
Lætatur.
Horat. Carm. II. 19.

Speſque, audaxque una metus, et fiducia pallens.
Statius Theb. VI. 393.

&c. &c. &c.

---

[*] *Euſebius* E. H. 1. 7.

[†] *Joſephus* Bell. Jud. VI. 5. *Tacitus*. *Suetonius*.

opinion that ſome extraordinary perſon ſhould ariſe and rule the earth, which muſt have come in all probability from the *Jews*.

The *Samaritans* hated the *Jews* ſo much that they cannot well be thought to have borrowed the hopes of a Meſſias from that nation. That they entertained ſuch hopes we read in the New Teſtament; which is alſo confirmed by the attempts of *Simon Magus*, and other *Samaritan* impoſtors.

Concerning the fitneſs of the time when Chriſt came into the world, the holy Scriptures ſay little; and we can only offer conjectures, which ought to have no more of authority than they are found upon examination to have of probability.

1. Our Lord came when men had been prepared by a long ſeries of prophecies to expect and receive him.

The promiſes of a Meſſias were at firſt more obſcure, and as the time of his coming drew near, more plain; and during the long interval between *Adam* and *Malachi*, different predictions concerning the perſon and the offices and the ſufferings and the proſperity of the Meſſias were delivered, which contained many things ſeemingly irreconcileable, and yet accompliſhed in Chriſt.

As the knowledge of theſe predictions was in a manner confined to the *Jewiſh* nation, it pleaſed God to make their religion * more known when the time of Chriſt's appearing drew near. Before his coming the Old Teſtament was tranſlated into the *Greek* language, a language † then, and long afterwards, the moſt univerſally underſtood, whereby the * *Gentiles* had acceſs to ſacred hiſtory and to the prophetic writings, and it appears from the books of the New Teſtament, and from other writers, that many proſelytes had learned of the † *Jews* to worſhip one God and to obey the moral parts of the Law of *Moſes*, and that ſuch perſons were to be found in moſt nations of the known world.

---

* *Euſebius* endeavours to prove that the *Gentiles* were indebted to the *Jews* on many accounts. *Eccl. Hiſt.* I. 2. & *Præp. Ev.*

† It is certain that the *Romans* took pains to propagate their language, and to eſtabliſh its ſuperior dignity, of which good proofs are collected by *Bayle*, Diction. CLAUDE, p. 897. But in the time of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, *Greek* was really the univerſal language. The New Teſtament is a proof of it, if proof were wanting; and this is one reaſon, amongſt others, which may be given why St. *Matthew* probably wrote his Goſpel in *Greek*. *Græca leguntur in omnibus fere gentibus: Latina ſuis finibus, exiguis ſanè, continentur.* Cicero *Orat.* pro *Arch.* *Quamdiu ſteterit aut Latinæ linguæ potentia, aut Græcæ gratia.* Seneca *Conſ. ad* Polyb. 21. *Sed noſtra conſtitutio, quam pro omni natione, Græcâ linguâ— compoſuimus*, ſays *Juſtinian*, Inſtit. L. III. Tit. viii. 3. One thing which contributed to ſpread the language of the Romans, was their Law; which, even when it was written in *Greek*, could ſcarce be underſtood by the *Greeks*, unleſs they had ſome knowledge of the *Latin* tongue

2. Chriſt came when the *Jews* wanted the Meſſias as an inſtructor.

The *Jews*, who from the time of *Moſes* to *Malachi* were ſeldom without a prophet, had none, as we can find, from the days of *Malachi* to the coming of our Saviour. The prophets uſed to be ſent to them to reprove them for their faults, to re-

---

tongue, of εμαγκιπω, φιδεῖ κομμιττω, ληγατον, ιντερδικτον, εξτραορδιναριος, τυτωρ, κυρατωρ, πυπιλλος, and a thouſand ſuch words.

* But it muſt be owned that the Scriptures, even after this tranſlation, were little known to many of the *Gentiles* for a conſiderable time. *Greek* and *Roman* hiſtorians, as *Diodorus Siculus*, *Trogus Pompeius* who is abridged by *Juſtin*, *Strabo*, *Tacitus*, and others, ſeem to have been ignorant of *Jewiſh* Antiquities.

† Who were diſperſed in all lands. See *Joſephus* II. p. 191. 407.

quire from them an obſervance of the laws of *Moſes*, and to foretel the Meſſias: but the writings of the prophets were in their hands, and conſtantly read; and ſerved for theſe purpoſes as much as any new meſſenger could have ſerved, unleſs he had been one of ſuperior authority to his predeceſſors. The *Jews* wanted no * new prophecies concerning the Meſſias; they ſaw him promiſed, as they thought, clearly in many places of the ſacred Books. There was as little occaſion for one who ſhould preſs upon them an adherence to the ritual Law; they obſerved it carefully, or rather ſuperſtitiouſly: but of two things they particularly ſtood in need, firſt, of inſtruction in the true nature of the ceremonial law; ſecondly, of receiving fuller aſſurances of a future ſtate. The ceremonial law was given to the *Jews*, partly in condeſcenſion to their temper and capacities, and partly to keep them ſeparated from the vices and idolatries of the Heathen. But their wrong opinions of it were attended with bad conſequences: they eſteemed it at too high a rate; they deſpiſed the *Gentiles*, and thought them excluded, in a great meaſure, from the favour of God, not ſo much for their vices, as becauſe they were legally impure, and obſerved not the Moſaic rites; and conſequently they entertained unſuitable notions of God and of morality. But the time was now approaching when their ceremonial law would be almoſt impracticable, when the *Romans* would deprive them of thoſe ſmall remains of liberty which they poſſeſſed, would deſtroy their temple, drive them out of their land, and diſperſe them into all nations. It was therefore neceſſary that they ſhould be taught that their ceremonies were no longer of importance, that God was no reſpecter of perſons, and that all good men were his children, that a *Jew* might perform his duty in another country as well as in *Judæa*, that he might converſe indifferently and freely with all the ſober and virtuous, that he ought to think himſelf a citizen of the world, account every man his * neighbour, and love him as ſuch.

---

* See *Le Clerc* de l'Incred. P. II. c. 7.

---

* The doctrine of univerſal love and charity was very neceſſary to be inculcated to *Jews* and *Gentiles*. Many *Pagans*

The * doctrine of a future ſtate had not been delivered in a full, clear, and ſatiſfactory manner in the Law or in the prophets. The *Sadducees* rejected it, ſuppoſing it not to be contained in the ſacred books; and the *Phariſees* and † *Eſſenes* who admitted it, founded their belief upon conſequences drawn from ſome expreſſions in Scripture, upon tradition, and upon ſuch arguments as their reaſon ſuggeſted, and had mixed together ſome true and ſome falſe notions about it. The expreſs promiſes made in the law to the righteous were of temporal good things, and theſe promiſes began to be leſs and leſs fulfilled, to the diſappointment of many pious perſons who ſcarce knew how to reconcile theſe ways of providence with the holy Scriptures. It

---

gans of great renown had carried the love of their country to a vitious exceſs, and had not ſcrupled to injure and oppreſs other nations, that they might advance the power and glory of their own. The *Romans* had not been free from this fault; the *Lacedæmonians* had been ſcandalouſly guilty of it. See *Plutarch* in *Ageſil.* et *Alcibiad.* *Thucydides* L. V, and *Grotius* de Jure B. *Proleg.* 3. 23. 24.

* *Tillotſon*, Vol. I. Serm. xxiii.

† *Eſſenes* & *Therapeutæ*; men who ſeem to have been but one remove from thoſe, who, by the *Roman* laws, were *ad agnatos et gentiles deducendi.*

was

was therefore expedient that they ſhould be taught by the Meſſias, that as the *Jewiſh* commonwealth with its political and ceremonial laws would ſoon ceaſe, God interpoſed no longer in their behalf, but invited the *Jews* and the reſt of mankind to a more ſublime and ſpiritual religion, and would beſtow upon his ſervants a recompenſe infinitely ſurpaſſing all that this unhappy world can beſtow.

3. About the time of Chriſt's coming, religion and morality were univerſally corrupted and greatly wanted reformation. The *Jewiſh* Church was overrun with error and ſuperſtition: the precepts of God, and the rules of equity and common ſenſe gave place to doctrines of men, to traditions contrary to them both. The moſt conſiderable and the moſt learned were thoſe who were the moſt depraved in their opinions, and in their practice, and they who ſhould have taught the truth to others were blind guides deluding thoſe who relied upon them.

We may judge of the ſtate of the *Gentile* world at that time by the ſtate of that conſiderable part of it which belonged to the

Roman Empire. Public ſpirit, a love of their country, diſintereſtedneſs, frugality, ſobriety, a deſire of reputation, and a contempt of wealth, had contributed to make the *Romans* great; but their ſucceſſes proved their undoing, and their national good qualities forſook them: their power ſtill continued, nor could it be ſoon deſtroyed, but the remains of virtue and their liberty fell together: they learned the vices of thoſe whom they had conquered, and taught them theirs in exchange. Such was the condition of the *Gentile* world when our Lord ſent forth his Apoſtles to inſtruct and reform them.

4. Though the heathen were then greatly corrupted in their lives, yet knowledge was conſiderably increaſed, and upon this account it was a proper ſeaſon for our Lord to appear. Truth and learning are friends; error and impoſture flouriſh under the protection of Ignorance. When the Goſpel was offered to mankind, the teachers of it had adverſaries who wanted neither inclination nor abilities to oppoſe it. To make its way at ſuch a time, and to bring over not only the lower ſort of people, but alſo ſome

of the learned who turned its own weapons againſt *Paganiſm*, this was an honour to the Chriſtian religion, and one proof of its truth.

5. At the time when our Lord came, the inſufficiency of the * *Jewiſh* religion, of natural religion, of ancient tradition, and of philoſophy, fully appeared.

The *Jewiſh* † religion was never deſigned to be univerſal or perpetual; it had alſo other defects which appeared the plainer when it was compared with the Chriſtian religion.

The author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* ſhews at large that the Chriſtian inſtitution ought to take place of the *Moſaic*, upon account of the comparative weakneſs and unprofitableneſs of the firſt covenant.

The inſufficiency of the *Jewiſh* revelation appeared alſo in ſome meaſure from that general corruption which had overrun it, of which mention has been already made.

---

* See *Le Clerc* Hiſt. Eccl. p. 113.

† *Euſebius* obſerves ὅτι Μωσέως νόμος μόνῳ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνει, καὶ τούτῳ ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκείας γῆς οἰκοῦντι ἀποδέδεικται, καὶ ὅτι διὰ τοῦτο ἑτέρου Προφήτου, καὶ ἑτέρου νόμου προσεδέησε· *Demonſtr. Ev.* I 1.

Concerning the inſufficiency of natural religion we may obſerve, that ſince natural religion conſiſts of thoſe duties which human reaſon can diſcover, reaſon and natural religion may here be conſidered as one and the ſame thing. There have been many diſputes about the ſufficiency or inſufficiency of human reaſon. Human reaſon ſeems to have its ſufficiency in one ſenſe, and its inſufficiency in another. The *ſufficiency* of human reaſon is this, that every one may find out as much as God requires from *him.* Men according to the place and age in which they live, the opportunities and the natural abilities conferred upon them, muſt differ extremely in knowledge; but every one may know all that God expects of him, which is, that he ſhould inform himſelf of his duty to the beſt of his power, and act ſuitably to his judgment and to the dictates of his conſcience.

The inſufficiency of human reaſon or natural religion conſiſted in this: Religion was ſo corrupted by fables and forgeries, and ſo obſcured by the doubts and diſputes of the learned, that it lay buried under falſhood and uncertainty, and was not to be retrieved without great difficulty.

And, if we may judge of the powers of reaſon by the diſcoveries of this kind which reaſon has ever made, we ſhall find that though ſeveral perſons determined juſtly on ſeveral moral ſubjects, yet there was not one of them who did not fall into ſome miſtakes in matters of morality and of religion.

Concerning the inſufficiency of tradition, we may obſerve that religion, as it ſtood in the heathen world, was not barely the reſult of reaſoning; but that a conſiderable part of it was made up of truths received by tradition from the remoteſt antiquity. Before learning flouriſhed, before the arts of diſputing were cultivated, the general opinion was that one God and Father of all had formed the univerſe, and that the ſoul ſubſiſted after it had left the body, and was happy or unhappy according to its paſt behaviour. Theſe notions were ſo early that the origin of them could never be diſcovered. But as the *Gentiles* were at a loſs to know whence theſe traditions aroſe, ſo neither did they receive them pure and unmixed, nor could they reſtore them to their natural ſimplicity; by length of time they were debaſed, darkned with lies and fables, and therefore grew inſufficient for religious purpoſes, and became weak incitements to virtue.

When natural religion and tradition were thus corrupted, there remained only one human method of retrieving them, and that was philoſophy. This method had been tried, and was found deficient.

For the philoſophers themſelves were not free from groſs miſtakes, from many defects both in principles [*] and practice. Beſides, the corruption was too general to be cured by philoſophy, which was not calculated for the benefit of the common people, nor [†] underſtood

---

[*] *Grotius* on *Rom.* i. 32. mentions the pernicious doctrines of ſome philoſophers. Some of them had looſe notions concerning the lawfulneſs of lying, and of fornication. *Whitby* on *Epheſ.* iv. 25. v. 6. *Theſſ.* i. iv. 5. *Grotius* on *Acts* xv. 20. As to practice, ſee what *Cicero* ſays of them, *Tuſc. Diſp.* II. 4. and the writer of the *Clement. Homil.* V. 18. and *Grotius* de Ver. R. C. II. 18. and *Whitby* on *Theſſ.* i. ii. 9.

[†] *Horace* tells us that his father uſed to ſay to him;

—— Sapiens vitatu quidque petitu
Sit melius, cauſſas reddet tibi: mi ſatis eſt, ſi
Traditum ab antiquis morem ſervare, tuamque
Dum cuſtodis eges, vitam famamque tueri
Incolumem poſſim. Serm. I. 4.

The

derſtood by them. Add to this, that thoſe learned moraliſts uſed to recommend virtue from its natural beauty and decency, * and to inſiſt chiefly on this motive, which though it may weigh much with ſome well-diſpoſed minds, yet muſt have little influence upon the bulk of mankind, who will not be moved, unleſs their fears or their hopes be ſtrongly affected.

The philoſophers by their endleſs † diſputes and diviſions darkned many truths, and taught nothing ſo effectually as doubt and ſuſpence. Inſtead of oppoſing the vulgar ſuperſtitions, they often complied with them, and outwardly conformed to the eſtabliſhed religions. Theſe and other diſadvantages under which philoſophy laboured, ſhew that it had little effect towards a reformation of ſentiments and manners. What it could do, it had done before the coming of Chriſt. It had been tried, and it had been found inſufficient.

The reaſonings of the Philoſophers were jargon to this plain honeſt man : but he thought it right to follow whatſoever things were of good report.

[*] See *Miſcell. Obſerv.* Vol. I. p. 33.

[†] Nimium altercando veritas amittitur.
In *Publii Syri* Sentent.

6. Laſtly, when our Lord came, * the moſt civilized and the moſt populous parts of *Europe* and *Aſia* were under one government, and ruled by common laws which in the main were juſt and good, the times were more quiet and happy than they had been, commerce flouriſhed, and travelling was made eaſy and ſafe; and this ſtate of things contributed much to the ſpeedy propagation of the Goſpel.

---

* Ἀνέτειλε γὰρ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτοῦ δικαιοσύνη, καὶ πλῆθος εἰρήνης γέγονεν, ἀρξάμενον ἀπὸ τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ, εὐτρεπίζοντος τοῦ Θεοῦ τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔθνη, ἵν' ὑπὸ ἕνα γένηται τῶν Ῥωμαίων βασιλέα· καὶ μὴ, διὰ τὸ προφάσει τῶν πολλῶν βασιλειῶν ἄμικτον τῶν ἐθνῶν πρὸς ἄλληλα, χαλεπώτερον γένηται τοῖς ἀποστόλοις τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τὸ ποιῆσαι ὅπερ προσέταξεν αὐτοῖς.

Origen. cont. *Celſ.* II. p. 79.

V.

The teſtimony of John *the* Baptiſt.

OUR Saviour in his diſcourſes with the *Jews* and with his diſciples made uſe of four proofs, to ſhew that he was ſent from God.

The firſt, upon which he plainly lays the greateſt ſtreſs, was taken from the miracles which he wrought. *The works which I do bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me. If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had ſin.*

The ſecond was taken from the prophecies which were fulfilled in him. * *If ye had believed Moſes, ye would have believed me;*

---

* Our Saviour and his Apoſtles often aſſure us that all the prophets, whoſe writings are contained in the Old Teſtament, have ſpoken of the coming of the Meſſias; and upon this, though not upon this either ſingly or chiefly, is founded the truth of our religion; for it ſtands in need of no proofs of its divinity from the Old Teſtament, which ſeems to receive

me, for he wrote of me. Search the Scriptures---for they teſtify of me.

The

ceive more confirmation from the Goſpel, than the Goſpel receives thence.

The prophecies in general were ſo delivered that they ſhould not be underſtood till the event explained them, for which many reaſons might be aſſigned. Hence it comes to paſs that after they have been all fulfilled in Chriſt, and by being compared together have given much light and ſtrength to each other, ſtill many of them, conſidered by themſelves, are not ſo irreſiſtibly evident as to force an aſſent from ſtubborn minds, and room is left for contradiction, doubt or cavil. Some of them are more obſcure and ambiguous, ſome more full and clear. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that as the time of Chriſt's coming drew nearer, the predictions concerning him ſhould be more diſtinct and plain; and ſo indeed they are.

Grotius allows that there are texts in the Prophets who lived after the captivity, which relate directly and ſolely to Jeſus Chriſt. His acknowledgment of this is of the more weight, becauſe he cannot be charged with wreſting the Scriptures to that purpoſe, and has been blamed for explaining away ſome prophecies which Chriſtians apply to Chriſt. *Chriſtus,* ſays he, *ut jam appropinquans, apertius a Prophetis indicatus eſt.* Hebr. viii. 8.

That Chriſt was foretold by the prophets, may be ſhewed, I think, without an accurate diſcuſſion of ſingle texts.

There are it may be a hundred different paſſages in the Old Teſtament relating to ſome perſon, whoſoever he be, one or more, and to certain conſiderable changes which ſhould happen in the world. Chriſtians ſay that they relate to Chriſt, and ſome of them are produced in theſe Diſcourſes. * He who would ſee more, may conſult *Fabricius*

The third was his * foreknowledge of future events. *Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to paſs, ye may believe that I am he.*

The fourth was the teſtimony of *John* the Baptiſt, concerning which our Saviour thus reaſons with the *Jews*: *If I bear witneſs of my ſelf,* if I produce no proof of my divine

---

De Ver. Chr. Rel. p. 569. & *Huet.* Dem. Ev. *Prop.* VII.

Hiſtory, ſacred and profane, ancient and modern, will furniſh us with a variety of heroes, kings, warriors, philoſophers, and illuſtrious perſons. If we endeavour to apply theſe paſſages in the Old Teſtament to any one of theſe great men, for example, to *Judas Maccabæus*, to *Confucius*, to *Socrates*, to *Solon*, to *Numa*, to *Scipio Africanus*, to *Auguſtus Cæſar*, &c. we immediately ſee that it is a vain attempt, that three fourths of them are no ways ſuitable to his character and his deeds; and that it is eaſy to ſelect many ſingle ones amongſt them which cannot poſſibly be adapted to him. If we apply them to Chriſt and to the religion eſtabliſhed by him, a ſurpriſing correſpondence immediately appears.

To aſcribe theſe coincidences to chance, it is to give a very poor and unſatisfactory account of them. He who can believe that chance produced them, ought not to object credulity to Chriſtians.

Something more concerning prophecy may be offered another time, ἐὰν ὁ Θεὸς θελήσῃ.

* *Euſebius* ſeems to have written a book to ſhew that all the predictions of Jeſus Chriſt had been accompliſhed. But that work is loſt. See *Præp. Ev.* I. 3. p. 8.

miſſion beſides a bare affirmation of it, *my witneſs is not true,* and I deſerve to be rejected.

There is another that beareth witneſs of me; namely *John* the Baptiſt; and that he teſtified of me ye know; for, *Ye ſent unto John, and he bare witneſs of the truth. But I receive not teſtimony from man.* I ſtand in no need of the witneſs of *John*, or of any other man:

I put you in mind of it, becauſe, *He was a burning and a ſhining light, and ye were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoice in his light.* You uſed to acknowledge him to be a prophet and a righteous man; and therefore I inſiſt upon his teſtimony, hoping that it may have ſome good effect upon you.

But I have greater witneſs than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame works that I do, bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me.

This proof taken from the teſtimony of *John*, though our Lord ſpeaks, in a manner, ſlightingly of it, when he compares it to the proof drawn from his own miracles, yet was an argument of particular force to the *Jews*, and could not fail to convince or to confound them: for as we read in another place, they durſt not openly ſpeak againſt *John*, becauſe the people generally had him in eſteem, and thought him a prophet. A proof therefore from his teſtimony would either remove their doubts, or reduce them to ſilence.

But that the argument, conſidered in itſelf, is ſatisfactory, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew in the following manner.

I. I will produce the teſtimony which *John* bare of Jeſus Chriſt.

II. I will give ſome account of the life and character of *John*.

III. I will thence ſhew that he is an unexceptionable witneſs.

IV. I will endeavour to remove an objection which may be made to his teſtimony.

I. I will produce the teſtimony which *John* bare of Jeſus Chriſt.

When *John* baptized the people, he exhorted them at the ſame time to believe in one who ſhould come after him, whoſe ſervant or diſciple he was not worthy to be; he told them that this perſon ſhould baptize them with the holy Ghoſt and with fire; which prediction was firſt accompliſhed at Pentecoſt, when Chriſt ſent the holy Ghoſt on his diſciples.

When *Jeſus* came to be baptized, *John* knew him, and declined to perform that office, alledging that it became not ſo conſiderable a perſon to receive baptiſm from him. After Chriſt was baptized, the holy Ghoſt deſcended upon him, and God by a voice from heaven declared him to be his beloved Son. This *John* ſaw and teſtified, and added that God had revealed to him that this was he who ſhould baptize with the holy Ghoſt.

When the prieſts and *Levites* came to aſk *John* who he was, he declared that he was not the Meſſias, but his forerunner, and the perſon foretold by *Iſaias*; and he told them that the Meſſias was at hand, and would ſoon manifeſt himſelf.

After this *John* took all opportunities of making Jeſus known to his own diſciples and to the *Jews*. He calls him *the Lamb of God who taketh away the ſins of the world*:

He

He ſays of him; *This is he of whom I ſpake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me*; that is, though he was born after me, and enters into his office after me, yet he is before me both in dignity and time.

Afterwards, when Jeſus was baptizing the *Jews* by his diſciples, and many reſorted to him, the diſciples of *John*, jealous o the honour of their maſter, complained to him that Jeſus drew away the people to himſelf, and took upon him the office of baptizing them. Upon this *John* with great ſincerity and modeſty declared how much he was inferior to Chriſt: He reminded them how often he had ſaid that he was not the Meſſias, but his forerunner, he told them that his office would ſoon expire, and that Chriſt, who then began to appear, ſhould obſcure his glory, which was to him a cauſe of joy, not of envy; he told them that Chriſt was the beloved Son of God, ſent by him, and receiving from him the holy Spirit without meaſure, to reſide upon him at all times, and to direct him in all things, that therefore whoſoever believed on him ſhould have everlaſting life, and whoſoever rejected him ſhould not ſee life, but the wrath of God would abide upon him.

Thus is *John* the Baptiſt a witneſs of Chriſt; of his office and dignity; he calls Chriſt the Son of God, and the redeemer of the world, he affirms that he had a being before he appeared on the earth, that he came from God to teach men the way to obtain eternal life; he aſſerts that he ſaw the Spirit deſcend upon him, and heard the voice from heaven which declared him the Son of God. He ſays that God, who had ſent him to baptize, had revealed to him that Jeſus was the Meſſias, having told him by what ſigns he might diſtinguiſh and know him.

II. To ſhew what opinion we ought to entertain of *John*, I proceed to give ſome account of his life and character.

The circumſtances attending his birth are related at large by St. *Luke*. I ſhall not recite them at preſent, but only obſerve that from them it manifeſtly appears that he was deſigned by Providence for great purpoſes.

All men, as we are told, were aſtoniſhed at thoſe things, and great expectations were raiſed concerning a child ſo favoured of heaven.

One reaſon why his birth was accompanied with many extraordinary events, ſeems to have been this.

Our Lord has given an illuſtrious teſtimony to his merit. He ſays that he was a burning and a ſhining light; that he was a prophet, and more than a prophet, that amongſt thoſe who were born of women there had not ariſen a greater than he. Yet, great as he was, in this he was inferior to many of the prophets, and to the diſciples of Chriſt, that he wrought no miracles. This power was withholden from him, that the difference between the Meſſias and his forerunner might manifeſtly appear, and Chriſt alone might poſſeſs that honour.

But that the *Jews* might not be tempted to entertain any prejudice againſt him, and to think him an inconſiderable perſon, becauſe he wrought no miracles, other ſingular marks of divine favour were beſtowed upon him; his coming was foretold by the ancient prophets, and his birth was promiſed by an Angel, at a time when his parents were ſtricken in years; and other miraculous circumſtances concurred to recommend him to the eſteem of the people.

He dwelt in the hill-country of *Judæa*, in a place remote from the reſort and the corruption of the world, till he appeared in his miniſtry, and came near *Jordan* and *Jeruſalem*, preaching the approach of the Meſſias. His life was auſtere and mortified, as his food and dreſs ſhewed; he came neither eating nor drinking, as Jeſus ſaid of him, upon which account ſome of the *Phariſees*, whom no behaviour could pleaſe, ſaid that he had a devil. He flattered not the *Jews*, he ſpake to them as one having authority, he rebuked them for their faults; he exhorted them to the exerciſe of piety towards God, of juſtice and mercy in their dealings with each other. * Great multitudes

---

* Though the ſucceſs of the miniſtry of *John* had been leſs than it was, yet might he not improperly be ſaid *to turn the hearts*, &c. and *πάντα ἀποκαθιστᾶν*, as he did all that was neceſſary for it. Verbs active ſometimes ſignify a deſign and endeavour to perform a thing, whether it be accompliſhed or not. See *Le Clerc* and *Whitby* on *Mark* ix. 12, 13. and *Grotius* on *Theſſ.* II. ii. 4.

Non

tudes came to him, confeſſed their ſins, and received baptiſm of him as a ſign of their repentance; and ſuch was the opinion which they had of him upon account of his ſanctity and ſelf-denial, that, though he wrought no miracles, they believed and acknowledged him to be a prophet, and thought that poſſibly he might be the Meſſias.

There were ſome of the *Jews* who joined themſelves to him, and became his diſciples. We find them mentioned in the New Teſtament, their frequent faſts, the jealouſy which they had of Chriſt, and their fears that he ſhould leſſen the reputation of their maſter.

Non ſi trecenis, quotquot eunt dies,
Amice, places illacrimabilem
Plutona tauris. *Horace* Carm. II. 14.

That is *placare tentes*.

Talibus Æneas ardentem et torva tuentem
Lenibat dictis animum, lacrimaſque ciebat.
Virgil Æn. VI. 467.

That is, *lenire tentabat*; for his endeavour was vain. By the way, *torva tuentem lenibat animum* is a ſtrange expreſſion. Perhaps it ſhould be *animam*, the ſhade or ghoſt of *Dido*.

Εἴ τίς σε τὸν δίκαιον αὐτίκ' ἐνθάδε
Κτείνοι παραστὰς, πότερα πυνθάνοι' ἂν εἰ
Πατήρ σ' ὁ καίνων, ἢ τίνοι' ἂν εὐθέως;

Εἴ τις σε κτείνοι, *if any one ſhould attempt to kill you.*
Sophocles Oed. Col. 1047.

The virtue of *John*, too great for the age in which he lived, and the eſteem which the people had for him, were the occaſion of his death. *Herod*, whom he had reproved, being offended at the freedom which he had taken, and probably ſuſpecting him on account of his popularity, had thoughts of killing him; but at the ſame time he feared that the people would reſent it, and ſtill retained ſome remains of reſpect for him. Whilſt he was thus in ſuſpenſe, having promiſed the daughter of *Herodias* to give her any thing that ſhe would aſk, at her requeſt he beheaded him. Thus the Baptiſt having performed his office, died ſoon after Chriſt had begun his miniſtry. God took him then to himſelf, as an * ancient Chriſtian writer has obſerved, that the people might no longer be divided between him and Chriſt, but might the more readily follow the Meſſias.

The reputation of this prophet ended not with his life; the people continued to honour his memory, in ſo much that when *Herod* had loſt an army by a great overthrow, the *Jews*, as * *Joſephus* informs us, ſaid that it was a divine judgment, and a juſt puniſhment inflicted upon him for putting *John* to death.

---

* Οἶμαι δὲ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο συγχωρηθῆναι τὴν τελευτὴν Ἰωάννου ταχίστην γενέσθαι, ὥστε πᾶσαν τοῦ πλήθους τὴν διάθεσιν ἐπὶ τὸν Χριστὸν μετελθεῖν, καὶ μηκέτι ταῖς περὶ ἀμφοτέρων ἑαυτοὺς σχίζεσθαι γνώμαις· *Chryſoſt.* in *Joan. Hom.* xxviii.

III. I proceed to ſhew, thirdly, that the teſtimony of *John* the Baptiſt ought to be received.

He affirms that he knew Jeſus to be the Meſſias, and this knowledge he acquires not by any obſervations which he had made upon the life and behaviour of Chriſt, nor from comparing his actions with the prophecies relating to the Meſſias; for at the time that he firſt gave his teſtimony, Chriſt had not diſcovered his divine miſſion, and was juſt entering into his office; nor does it appear that Chriſt had declared any thing of it to him, or any way endeavoured to perſuade him that he was the Meſſias. He is not guided by conjectures, but by ſure and convincing evidence, by immediate divine revelation, and by a voice from heaven declaring Chriſt to be the Son of God. He aſſures us that God who had ſeparated him from his mother's womb for his own ſervice, and who had ſent him to go before the Meſſias and prepare his way, had alſo diſcovered to him that Chriſt was that perſon.

---

* *Antiq.* XVIII. 7.

His record therefore depends upon his veracity, and his veracity appears unqueſtionable. Many circumſtances concur to add weight and authority to his teſtimony, and to remove all ſuſpicion of enthuſiaſm and impoſture.

For, from the obſervations which have been already made on *John* the Baptiſt, on the teſtimony which he gave, and on the manner in which he gave it, from theſe we may diſcover the character of a great and a good man. We ſee in him auſterity of life, ſelf-denial, contempt of the pleaſures and vanities of the world, an active yet diſcreet zeal, a courage and conſtancy ariſing from true piety, and a ſincere modeſty and humility. He flattered not the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*, who came to his baptiſm, but told them that they were great ſinners; he aſſumed no honours which belonged not to him; he ſaid leſs of himſelf than he might have ſaid with truth, when the *Jews* ſent meſſengers to aſk him whether he were the Meſſias, or ſome prophet. His diſciples were probably good men, but they had an imprudent regard for him, and for their own credit, as they were his followers, and therefore they feared that Chriſt would draw all men after him, and leſſen the reputation of their maſter; but he was not to be moved by ſuch improper motives, nor did he ceaſe to bear teſtimony to Chriſt, and to acknowledge his own inferiority. He was appointed of God to exhort and reprove with all authority; and this office he performed towards *Herod*, though he could not be ignorant of the danger to which he expoſed himſelf in telling diſagreeable truths to a wicked prince. By his blameleſs and upright behaviour he gained the reſpect and eſteem of the *Jews*, bad as they were; and after his death, the hiſtorian before named, who ſeems to have had no temptation to be partial to his memory, did juſtice to his character, and recorded his virtues, and the impreſſion which they made on the minds of the people.

He was a man who practiſed the auſterities of a mortified life, who rejected even innocent pleaſures, and appeared ſeverely virtuous, who exhorted all men to righteouſneſs, and lived ſuitably to his own doctrines. He could not act this part with a view to any worldly profit, and to enrich himſelf: he ſought no ſuch advantages, and if he had ſought them, he would never have obtained them by ſuch methods, by pretending to ſlight them, by dwelling in the wilderneſs, and by exhorting men to virtues, of which if he had not ſet them an example, he would have been greatly deſpiſed. Nothing therefore can be thought to have influenced him unleſs religion, or vanity and the love of fame. If he was guided by ambition, he had reaſon to be ſatisfied with his ſucceſs: all *Jeruſalem* was moved at his preaching, and the people reſorted to him, receiving his inſtructions and his baptiſm, and confeſſing their ſins. They had ſo great an opinion of him, that they thought him certainly one ſent from God; perhaps one of the old prophets returned into the world, perhaps the Meſſias himſelf. What uſe did he make of this favourable diſpoſition of the people? He ſpake of himſelf with much lowlineſs and modeſty, and exhorted them to acknowledge Chriſt as the Meſſias. If he had been a proud and ambitious man, he would not have ſet Jeſus above himſelf, he would at leaſt have been ſilent, and have left the *Jews* to judge for themſelves.

We may then affirm that he was, what he ſeemed to be, a good man, and a lover of truth; and that he would not have deceived the people in any caſe, above all, not in a caſe ſo important. He decided a queſtion not of ſmall conſequence, but concerning the Meſſias, whom the prophets had foretold, whoſe coming was then expected, to whom the nation was bound to pay obedience, who ſhould in ſome ſenſe be a ruler, and a deliverer, and the founder of an everlaſting kingdom. If we ſuppoſe him capable of deceiving the *Jews* in this affair, we muſt ſuppoſe him wicked to the higheſt degree, one who feared not God, nor regarded man; who endeavoured to lead into a fatal error his own nation by which he was honoured and reſpected. But it is unreaſonable to ſuppoſe him guilty of ſo foul a crime.

We may alſo conclude that he would not have born teſtimony to one whom he did not well know to be the Meſſias, becauſe common prudence would have kept him from throwing away ſo fooliſhly his good name and reputation. The character of the Meſſias could not be long perſonated by the moſt artful impoſtor. He was to be a teacher of truth and righteouſneſs; in him the prophecies were to be accompliſhed, by him many miracles were to be performed. If therefore *John* had directed the *Jews* to a falſe Meſſias, to one in whom none of theſe characters appeared, his fraud or his error would have been diſcovered, he would have expoſed himſelf to the puniſhment which a falſe prophet deſerved, at leaſt he would have loſt the eſteem and favour of the *Jews*, and the fair and unblemiſhed reputation which till then he had preſerved, and been the object of their contempt and hatred. Nothing can make us ſuſpect that he would have acted a part ſo inconſiſtent and extravagant, or hinder us from believing that he ſpake as he was directed by the Spirit of God.

Nor is it leſs evident that he acted on this occaſion by no motives of intereſt or partiality. It was of no advantage to him: on the contrary, he ſaw, what his diſciples ſaw, that if Chriſt were acknowledged to be the Meſſias, he would be no longer followed and admired. Nor can we ſuppoſe him partial out of friendſhip; for there appears not to have been any intimacy between him and Chriſt. We may obſerve that *John* was a perſon of eminent virtue, that he had born witneſs to Chriſt, that he was related to him, and that upon all theſe accounts he ſeemed to deſerve diſtinguiſhing marks of his favour. Yet Chriſt, as far as we can learn from the Evangeliſts, ſeldom converſed with him; the reaſon of which probably was, that the teſtimony of *John* might appear of the more weight, when none could ſuſpect him prejudiced for his friend and his relation.

But ſtill it may be alledged againſt his teſtimony, that he was an enthuſiaſt. Some of the *Jews* in the days of our Saviour ſaid that *John* the Baptiſt had loſt his ſenſes, becauſe they had nothing elſe to ſay againſt him. The accuſation is groundleſs; his diſcourſes and his reputation ſufficiently confute it; his prophetic character proves it to be falſe. He foretold the appearing of the Meſſias, the calamities which ſhould befall the unconverted *Jews*, the death of Chriſt, and the deſcent of the holy Ghoſt. Enthuſiaſm may make a man fancy extraordinary communications with the deity, and it may lead him to auſterities and ſelf-denial; but it will not enable him to declare future events.

IV. I ſhall, in the laſt place, endeavour to remove an objection which may be offered againſt the teſtimony of *John*.

It is related in the New Teſtament that *John*, when he was in priſon, hearing of the miracles of Chriſt, ſent two of his diſciples to him, ſaying, *Art thou he that ſhould come, or look we for another?* Hence it may be objected that ſince *John* at the latter end of his life * doubted whether Jeſus were the

---

* *Tertullian* thinks that *John* really doubted, *Adverſ. Marcion.* IV. 18. *De Præſcr. Hæret.* 8. and *Le Clerc* inclines to the ſame opinion.

Meſſias, the force of the teſtimony which he bare before is greatly weakened, and he may be ſuppoſed to have changed his opinion, and, as far as we can find, to have died uncertain what to think upon this affair.

In anſwer to this objection I would obſerve;

Firſt, that the Evangeliſts, who have recorded the teſtimony which *John* bare of Jeſus Chriſt, have alſo preſerved the doubtful meſſage which he ſent to our Lord, and which may ſeem to leſſen the ſtrength of his former teſtimony. This is one inſtance, amongſt many more, of their ſincerity in repreſenting the truth without diſguiſe.

Secondly; *John* the Baptiſt at the beginning of his miniſtry, declared that Chriſt was the Meſſias, and afterwards, when he was in priſon he heard of the miraculous works done by Chriſt, which tended to confirm him in his firſt opinion. If at that time he began to grow doubtful, the only imaginable cauſe of his doubts muſt have been this, that Chriſt appeared not as a temporal prince, to free him from his bonds and the *Jews* from their ſervitude. Since then his doubts, if he had any, muſt have ariſen from his wrong apprehenſions of the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, and of the happineſs which the ſervants of the Meſſias ſhould enjoy, they will never invalidate the teſtimony which he had ſo often born to Chriſt, and the revelation made to him, upon which his teſtimony was founded.

Thirdly; the words of *John* the Baptiſt, taken in their obvious ſenſe, imply a doubt whether Chriſt were the Meſſias; but almoſt all expoſitors agree in thinking that he had no doubts about it, and that he ſent not this meſſage for his own information, becauſe *John*, as himſelf aſſerts, knew Chriſt to be the Meſſias by divine revelation, and becauſe he heard that Chriſt manifeſted his power by miracles, and had fulfilled that part of his character. They endeavour therefore to aſſign ſome other reaſon why he propoſed this queſtion to Chriſt.

The moſt common opinion is, that he propoſed it for the information of his diſciples, hoping that Chriſt would ſatisfy them by his anſwer, and perhaps by working miracles before them, and that they would at laſt lay aſide their prejudices and join themſelves to Chriſt.

But there is another opinion, leſs followed indeed, and yet more probable, which is, that as the *Jews* in general, and the * diſciples of Chriſt, ſo alſo *John* and his diſciples expected a temporal reign of the Meſſias, and that they wondered why Jeſus, who at that time wrought many miracles, did not deliver *John* out of the hands of his enemies.

He of all perſons ſeemed moſt to deſerve ſuch favour and protection. He was ſeparated from his mother's womb, and appointed by divine providence to be the forerunner of the Meſſias, to be the laſt and the moſt honoured of all the prophets who came before Chriſt; he was ſent to bear teſtimony to him, and to prepare the world to receive him; and this office he had faithfully fulfilled; he was related to Chriſt, and in virtue had no ſuperior amongſt the *Jews*; he was now in bonds for the ſake of righteouſneſs, and his life depended upon the will of a wicked prince who was exaſperated againſt him. Being in theſe circumſtances and hearing of Chriſt's miracles, he ſends two diſciples to him, and bids them ſay; *Art thou he that ſhould come, or look we for another?* In which words we may ſuppoſe that he indirectly beſought his aſſiſtance; as if he had ſaid:

---

* Some of them had been diſciples of *John*, and had learn'd nothing from him concerning the ſpiritual nature of Chriſt's kingdom, as appears *Acts* i. 6.

If thou art the Meſſias, why am I confined in priſon? why may I not enjoy with thy diſciples the pleaſure of ſeeing him, whoſe coming I proclaimed, appear in his glory? It will caſt ſome reproach upon thee, if thy forerunner be left to periſh. The miſerable find daily relief from thy miracles; add one in favour of me, and deliver me, for thou canſt not want power.

It is true that *John* was filled with the holy Ghoſt, and had better notions of Chriſt than perhaps any of Chriſt's diſciples entertained before the reſurrection of their maſter. This we may conclude from the things which he ſpake of Chriſt's power and dignity, and of the end for which he came into the world. He calls him *the Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world,*

which

which might incline us to imagine that he knew Chriſt ſhould ſuffer and be a ſacrifice for ſin. But it is not improbable that though by revelation he knew in general that Chriſt would ſave from their ſins thoſe who ſhould believe in him, yet he knew not how he would effect it; that the particulars concerning the ſufferings and death of Chriſt were not diſcovered to him, and that both he and the prophets before him might foretell things of the Meſſias which they did not fully underſtand.

The anſwer which Chriſt makes to *John's* diſciples agrees very well with the expoſition which is here given of *John's* meſſage. *Bleſſed is he whoſoever ſhall not be offended in me*; bleſſed are they who ſhall not be offended upon account of the low condition in which I appear, of the ſufferings which I muſt endure, and of thoſe which my ſervants ſhall undergo in this world.

Laſtly; there remains another ſolution of this difficulty to which ſome may perhaps give the * preference.

---

* But I ſhould prefer the former.

John, for the reaſons already mentioned, could not well doubt whether the perſon, whom he had baptized and to whom he had born teſtimony, were the Meſſias; but being in priſon, and hearing the fame of Chriſt's miracles, he wanted to be ſatisfied of two things, whether Jeſus were that very perſon whom he had baptized and proclaimed, and whether the rumour concerning his miracles were true. He ſends therefore his diſciples, and bids them aſk Chriſt if he were the expected Meſſias, and bring him an account of all that paſſed upon that occaſion, that by Chriſt's anſwer and their report, he might form a ſurer judgment.

But, whether *John* had or had not any doubts at the time when he ſent the meſſage, thus much is highly probable, that after the return of his diſciples, he and they were fully ſatisfied, firſt, becauſe Chriſt's anſwer and miracles were ſufficient to convince any wiſe and good man, and ſecondly, becauſe St. *Matthew* relates that when *John* was beheaded, *his diſciples came and* *took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jeſus*; which was plainly an act of reſpect and kindneſs, and the behaviour of men who entertained an honourable opinion of Chriſt.

VI.

The Scriptures of the New Teſtament.

THE following obſervations relate to the truth, the importance, and the authority of the Scriptures of the New Teſtament.

I. The books of the New Teſtament were written by thoſe to whom they are aſcribed, that is, * by Apoſtles, or by believers who lived and converſed with the Apoſtles. Of this we have as clear proof

---

* Ἐν τοῖς νόθοις κατατετάχθω ϗ τῶν Παύλȣ πράξεων ἡ γραφὴ, ὅ, τε λεγόμενος Ποιμὴν, ϗ ἡ ἀποκάλυψις Πέτρȣ· ϗ πρὸς τούτοις, ἡ φερομένη Βαρνάβα Ἐπιστολὴ, ϗ τῶν Ἀποστόλων αἱ λεγόμεναι διδαχαί. *Pro ſpuriis habendi ſunt etiam Actus Pauli, et liber Paſtoris titulo inſcriptus, et Revelatio Petri: Barnabæ item Epiſtola, et quæ dicuntur Inſtitutiones Apoſtolorum.* Euſebius E. H. III. 25. Where *Euſebius* by the word *νόθοις* cannot poſſibly mean leſs than that theſe books were of ambiguous and conteſted authority. See *Valeſius*, and *Beverege*, Cod. Can. Vind. L. ii. 9. and *Pearſon*, Vindic. Ignat. i. 8. The authority of *Euſebius* in points of this kind is great, and has been ſo accounted by all good judges. If the Διδαχαὶ Ἀποστόλων are not the *Apoſto-*

as

Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, *Euſebius* has never mentioned the *Conſtitutions.*

The *Epiſtle* of BARNABAS is extant, and is ſufficiently illuſtrated by learned men. Peruſe him ;—— *he ſhall ſpeak for himſelf.*

Clemens Alexandrinus often cites this Epiſtle ; yet he ſcruples not to contradict its author, *Pædag.* ii. x. p. 221. as the Archbiſhop has obſerved in his notes.

In the APOSTOLICAL CONSTITUTIONS we find the following paſſage, VI. 24. *It has pleaſed God that the law of righ*[illegible] *ſhould not only be publiſhed by us,* [the Apoſtles] *but that it ſhould be made conſpicuous and illuſtrious by the* Romans ; *for they alſo believing in the Lord have forſaken their idolatry and iniquity, and ſhew favour to the righteous, and puniſh the wicked ; but they have the* Jews *for tributaries, and ſuffer them not to exerciſe their own laws and ordinances.* Οὐ μόνον δὲ τῆς δικαιοσύνης νόμον δι᾽ ἡμῶν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι βούλεται, ἀλλὰ ϗ διὰ Ῥωμαίων εὐδόκησεν αὐτὸν φαίνεσθαι ϗ λάμπειν· ϗ γὰρ ϗ οὗτοι πιστεύσαντες ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον, ϗ πολυθείας ἀπέστησαν ϗ ἀδικίας· ϗ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἀποδέχονται, ϗ τοὺς φαύλους κολάζουσιν. Ἰουδαίους δὲ ὑποφόρους ἔχουσι, ϗ τοῖς ἰδίοις δικαιώμασιν οὐκ ἐῶσι κεχρῆσθαι. All this was true ; but it was not true till all the Apoſtles had been long dead.

The *Conſtitutions* ſtrictly prohibit the reading of Pagan books : Τῶν ἐθνικῶν βιβλίων πάντων ἀπέχου. i. 6. *Clemens Alexandrinus* calls the maintainers of this opinion weak and ignorant perſons. Indeed, if they were in the right, he was a great ſinner. Οὐ λέληθεν δέ με καὶ τὰ θρυλλούμενα πρός τινων ἀμαθῶς ψοφοδεῶν, χρῆναι λεγόντων περὶ τὰ ἀναγκαιότατα καὶ συνέχοντα τὴν πίστιν καταγίνεσθαι· τὰ

δὲ

as the nature of the thing can admit, or any reaſonable perſon can deſire, namely the teſti-

δὲ ἔξωθεν καὶ περιττὰ ὑπερβαίνειν, μάτην ἡμᾶς τρίβοντα ϗ κατέχοντα περὶ τοῖς οὐδὲν συμβαλλομένοις πρὸς τὸ τέλος. *Strom.* I. 1. p. 326. See alſo *Socrates* Hiſt. Eccl. iii. 16. If the ancient Chriſtians had obſerved this precept, *Julian* would have had no occaſion to forbid them to teach Claſſic authors, grammar, rhetoric, philoſophy, *&c.* *Epiſt.* p. 192—195. Not only Chriſtian writers reproached *Julian* for it, but *Ammianus Marcellinus* honeſtly condemn'd his ſpiteful and ſcandalous Edict.

The LXXXVI. *Apoſtol. Canon* ſays that the *Con[illegible]itutions* ought not to be made public; ἃς οὐ χρὴ [illegible]σιεύειν ἐπὶ πάντων. It muſt be confeſſed that this order was juſt and prudent, on many accounts.

Concerning the SHEPHERD OF HERMAS, it is obſervable that the perſons who act in it are moſt of them *allegorical* perſons and *ideal* beings, ſuch as appear in the *Table* of *Cebes*, and in the *Hercules* of *Prodicus Ceus*. An ancient Lady converſes with him, and tells him that ſhe is the *Church* of God. Afterwards ſeveral virgins come and diſcourſe with him, and when he wants to know who they are, he is told by the *Shepherd-Angel*, that they are *Faith*, *Abſtinence*, *Patience*, *Chaſtity*, *Concord*, &c.

There is a great conformity between *Hermas* and the author of the ſecond book of *Apocryphal Eſdras*; for a Woman converſes with *Eſdras*, who, as the Angel tells him, was *Sion*, or the *Jewiſh* Church; and as in the ſame book the Woman vaniſhes away, and in her place appears a City; ſo in *Hermas* the Church is repreſented to him under the image of a Tower.

The Prophets ſometimes beheld, but it was in *tranſient* viſion, ſuch kind of perſons. *Zechariah* ſaw *Wickedneſs* in the teſtimony of all antiquity, of all the Chriſtian writers who lived in or near thoſe times.

II. The

---

the ſhape of a woman, ch. v. and St. *John* viewed *Death* and *Hades* Rev. vi. 18. and the *Church* appearing as a woman, *Rev.* xii. 1. and *Babylon* as a harlot, *Rev.* xvii. 3.

It is related in *Cyprian,* Epiſt. 39. *Edit. Oxon.* that the *Church* appeared in a viſion, or dream, *in viſione per noctem,* to *Celerinus,* and commanded him to receive the office of *Reader,* which he in humility had declined. Add to this that St. *John,* in his *ſecond Epiſt.* calls the Church *the Elect Lady* by [illegible]*oſopopæia,* as ſome interpreters think; but the contrary opinion is more probable.

Afterwards III. 9. *Hermas* tells us that the Church which appeared to him was *the Son of God.* The Apoſtles repreſent Chriſt as the head, the bridegroom, the huſband of the Church.

Hermas ſeems to have had ſome literature, for though his ſubject did not lead him to ſhew any learning, he accidentally diſcovers a little of it. He makes the Angel ſay, *Patr. Apoſt.* Ed. Cler. p. 99. *Vide ſtillicidium, quod cavat lapidem.* So *Lucretius* I.

Stillicidi caſus lapidem cavat.

But this thought is indeed very trite and obvious.

In the parable of the *Elm* and the *Vine,* p. 104. the Angel ſays; *Vitis hæc, niſi applicita fuerit ulmo, non poteſt multum fructum facere. Jacens enim in terrâ,* &c. which is very like the ſpeech of *Vertumnus* in *Ovid,* Met. XIV.

Ulmus erat contra ſpatioſa tumentibus uvis:
Quam ſocia poſtquam pariter cum vite probavit;
At ſi ſtaret, ait, cælebs ſine palmite truncus,
Nil præter frondes, quare peteretur, haberet.
Hæc quoque, quæ juncta vitis requieſcit in ulmo;
Si non nupta foret, terræ acclinata jaceret.

The

II. The main parts of the Chriſtian religion, enough, I mean, to eſtabliſh the truth of

The *firſt Epiſtle* of CLEMENS is in the main a good piece, and not unworthy of an Apoſtolical Father, though it has a few ſmall ſpots, and poſſibly, as *Edw. Bernard* and ſome others think, a few interpolations.

The ſame may be ſaid of *the ſecond Epiſtle of Clemens*, if it be his. There is indeed a citation at the end of it from the *Goſpel according to the Ægyptians*, which might as well have been omitted, and which perhaps was added by another hand.

This Epiſtle begins thus; Ἀδελφοὶ, οὕτως δεῖ ἡ[illegible] φρονεῖν περὶ Ἰησοῦ, ὡς περὶ Θεοῦ, ὡς περὶ κριτοῦ ζ[illegible]ων [illegible] νεκρῶν· καὶ οὐ δεῖ ἡμᾶς μικρὰ φρονεῖν περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν· ἐν τῷ γὰρ φρονεῖν ἡμᾶς μικρὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ, μικρὰ καὶ ἐλπίζομεν λαβεῖν. *Fratres, ita ſentire nos oportet de Jeſu Chriſto, tanquam de Deo, tanquam de judice vivorum et mortuorum; nec decet nos humilia ſentire de ſalute noſtrâ: dum enim humiliter ſentimus de illo, parva etiam accepturos nos ſperamus.* I cite this place, becauſe it wants emendation, and ſhould be corrected thus; — οὐ δεῖ ἡμᾶς μικρὰ φρονεῖν περὶ τοῦ ἀρχηγοῦ τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν· *nec decet nos humilia ſentire de* auctore *ſalutis noſtræ.* This not only makes better ſenſe, and agrees better with περὶ αὐτοῦ which follows it, but alludes to the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, of which *Clemens* is obſerved to make frequent uſe in his unconteſted Epiſtle. *Hebr.* ii. 10. τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν.

The writer of this Epiſtle ſeems, in the place which I have cited, to have had in view the *Ebionites*, πτωχῶς καὶ ταπεινῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ δοξάζοντας. λιτὸν μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν καὶ κοινὸν ἡγοῦντο, κατὰ προκοπὴν ἤθους αὐτὸ μόνον ἄνθρωπον δεδικαιωμένον —— qui humiliter admodum et abjectè de Chriſto ſentirent. Eum enim ſimplicem ac vulgarem, nec aliud

quam

of it, may be found in almoſt each ſingle book or treatiſe contained in the New Teſtament.

Take any of the Goſpels, or the Acts of the Apoſtles, or the * Revelation, or any of

---

quam hominem eſſe cenſebant, qui profectu virtutis juſtus factus fuiſſet. *Euſeb.* E. H. III. 27.

Clemens, in his firſt Epiſtle, VI. p. 151. *Patr. Apoſt.* ſays; Ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις πόλεις μεγάλας κατέστρεψεν, καὶ ἔθνη μεγάλα ἐξεῤῥίζωσεν, alluding, perhaps, to *Horace:*

> [illegible] Thyeſten exitio gravi
> Stravere, et altis urbibus ultimæ
> Stetere cauſſæ cur perirent
> Funditus ———.

The ſpurious books under the names of Apoſtles are not altogether uſeleſs. They ſhew that the Forgers in thoſe days were men of poor abilities, and by their deformity they ſerve to ſet off the writings of the Apoſtles. None of theſe Impoſtors keeps up the character which he aſſumes;

> *Aut ita mentitur, ſic veris falſa remiſcet,*
> *Primo ne medium, medio ne diſcrepet imum.*

* *Dionyſius Alexandrinus* held the *Revelation* to be a ſacred book, but was of opinion that it was not written by the Apoſtle St. *John,* and that the language and manner of compoſition ſhewed it to be of another perſon. His reaſons may be ſeen in *Euſebius* E. H. VII. 25. It muſt be owned that there is a difference of ſtyle between the *Revelation* and the *Goſpel,* of which I could give proofs, if it were needful; but the ſubject is alſo different. *Il ne faut pas s'étonner que l'air de l'Apocalypſe ſoit different de celui qu'on remarque dans les autres ecrits de S. Jean, parceque la matiere en eſt extreme-*

of the Epiſtles, two or three excepted, and if they be allowed to be genuine, and to give

---

extremement differente. Pour la langue, outre les autres raiſons qu'on en pourroit rendre, ne peut on pas dire qu'eſtant relegué a Patmos, il n'avoit pas auprés de lui les meſmes perſonnes qu'il avoit a Epheſe pour ſe faire aider dans le choix des termes et des expreſſions? Et peuteſtre meſme que la chaleur de l' Eſprit de Dieu le preſſoit d' écrire promtement ce qu'il avoit vu, ſans ſonger à une pureté et à une elegance qui n'eſt rien du tout devant Dieu. Tillemont *Mem. Eccl.* T. I. *S. Jean. Not.* 9. *Tillemont*'s conjecture is founded upon a ſuppoſition which ſeveral perſons will not admit, namely, that St. *John* wrote his Revelation at *Patmos*.

They who think, with Sir *Iſaac Newton*, that St. *John* wrote the Revelation long before the Goſpel, may ſuppoſe that the Apoſtle, when he compoſed the Goſpel, had improved his ſtyle by converſing with the *Greeks* of *Aſia Minor*.

But, beſides ancient teſtimony, there is alſo *internal* reaſon to conclude that the Goſpel, and the Revelation are the work of the ſame author:

Thus; *John* alone calls Chriſt Λόγος, *the Word*, in the beginning of the Goſpel, and in *Rev.* xix. 13.

John alone records that the Baptiſt called Chriſt *the Lamb of God*, alone applies to him the direction concerning the Paſchal lamb, *a bone of him ſhall not be broken*, alone deſcribes him as *the Lamb*. Revel. v. 6.

John makes great uſe of the words; λόγος, φῶς ἀληθινὸν, ἀλήθεια, μάρτυς, ὁ ἀληθινὸς, μαρτυρῶ, ζωὴ, ἀγάπη, ἀγαπῶ, in thoſe writings which are aſcribed to him.

John alone cites, *They ſhall look on him whom they pierced*, in the Goſp. xix. 37. and *Rev.* i. 7.

give a true account of the things which they relate, the Chriſtian religion muſt be * acknowledged to be fully confirmed.

III. The books of the New Teſtament have deſcended to us uncorrupted in any

---

John alone relates that a ſoldier pierced the ſide of Chriſt, and that blood and water came forth, xix. 34. and alludes to it, *Epiſt.* I. v. 6. as ſome Commentators ſuppoſe.

Rev. xxi. 27. Καὶ οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς αὐτὴν πᾶν κοινὸν ϗ ποιοῦν βδέλυγμα ——

κοινὸν and ποιοῦν are *neuters* put for *maſculines*, as in the *Goſp.* vi. 37. πᾶν ὃ δίδωσί μοι ὁ Πατὴρ, πρὸς ἐμὲ ἥξει. *Grotius.* And *Epiſt.* I. V. 4. πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ νικᾷ τὸν κόσμον.

Rev. xxii. 14. ἔσται ἡ ἐξουσια αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς.—— ἐξουσία, *jus,* as in the *Goſp.* I. 12. ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα Θεοῦ γενέσθαι. *Grot.*

Rev. xxii. 2. ἐντεῦθεν ϗ ἐντεῦθεν. The ſame expreſſion is found in the *Goſp.* xix. 18. Some MSS. have in the *Rev.* ἐντεῦθεν ϗ ἐκεῖθεν, but it ſeems to be an alteration quite unneceſſary. *Ariſtot.* cited in *Conſtant. Lexic.* ἔνθεν ϗ ἔνθεν τῆς ἀκάνθης. *Herodotus* II. 176. ὁ μὲν ἔνθεν, ὁ δ' ἔνθεν τοῦ μεγάρου. *Sophocles* Ajac. 731. —— ὀνείδεσιν Ἤρασσον ἔνθεν κἄνθεν. Nothing is more common than ἔνθα ϗ ἔνθα. *Hinc et hinc* is found in *Virgil* and other poets, and often in *Seneca*'s Tragedies.

* In ſcripturâ Novi Teſtamenti, imo in ſolis libris Lucæ et Joannis ea continentur, quæ cuivis Chriſtiano, cognitu, ſperatu, factu ſunt neceſſaria; quia hoc ſibi fuiſſe propoſitum, alter in præfatione, alter in concluſione operis profitentur. Sed præter hæc multa ſunt ſcitu utilia, multa ad regimen Eccleſiæ etiam neceſſaria. *Grotius* Annot. ad Conſ. Caſs. p. 628.

thing material. This appears evidently from the citations which have been made out of them by Chriſtian writers in all ages, from the high eſteem and veneration in which they have ever been held, from the multitude of copies and early tranſlations, which left no room to fraud or inattention to do them any important injury, and from the various readings themſelves, which, for the moſt part, are of ſmall conſequence.

IV. The truth of the things contained in theſe books depends upon the integrity of the Apoſtles, who did and endured ſo much for the ſake of the Goſpel. The good character of the Apoſtles is confirmed by the teſtimony of thoſe many thouſands who were converted by them; and the innocence and patience and great ſufferings of theſe primitive Chriſtians may be confirmed by the teſtimony of *Pagan* authors, and cannot with any ſhew of reaſon be denied.

V. There never was a book which abounded more with internal proofs of the truth of its contents than the New Teſtament. A ſpirit of piety, charity, and diſintereſtedneſs appears through the whole. The Evangeliſts, when they relate the ſame things, differ or ſeem to differ in ſmall circumſtances; they ingenuouſly confeſs the miſbehaviour of the Apoſtles upon ſome occaſions; they have ſometimes recorded * what the ſmalleſt degree of craft and diſſimulation would have taught them to ſuppreſs; they enter into a large and accurate detail of places, times, perſons, and events, in which if they had mixed fraud and falſhood, it might eaſily have been detected.

Of all the proofs which the New Teſtament carries in it ſelf of its truth, there are few ſtronger than thoſe which may be taken from the diſcourſes of Jeſus Chriſt

Eminent men are obſerved to have uſually a ſtyle of their own. Whoſoever examines the diſcourſes of our Lord with attention, may find in them a certain character and way of ſpeaking peculiar to him. This

---

* A ſtatuary works upon marble, an hiſtorian upon facts: both cut them to their fancy, and pare off all that will not ſerve for their purpoſe. The Writers of the New Teſtament ſtand remarkably clear from this imputation,

manner, by which he may be diſtinguiſhed, conſiſts in * raiſing matter of inſtruction and moral reflection from the things which were at hand, which preſented themſelves to him and to his audience.

Hence it is that his ſermons to the people, and his converſation with his diſciples, allude perpetually to the time of the year, or to the place where he was, or to the objects ſurrounding him, or to the occupation and circumſtances of thoſe to whom he addreſſed himſelf, or to the ſtate of public affairs. Of this ſeveral examples might be produced. I ſhall inſtance in thoſe which may be taken out of his ſermon upon the mount.

In the ſpring, our Saviour went into the fields, and ſat down on a mountain, and made that diſcourſe which is recorded in St. *Matthew*, and which is full of obſervations ariſing from the things which offered themſelves to his ſight: for,

When he exhorted his diſciples to truſt in God, he bade them † *behold* the fowls of the air, which were then flying about them, and were fed by divine Providence, though they did not *ſow*, nor *reap*, nor *gather into barns*; he bade them take notice * of the lilies of the field, which were then blown, and were ſo beautifully clothed by the ſame power, and yet toiled not, like the huſbandmen, who were then at work.

---

* In ſpeaking *pro re natâ.*

† ἐμβλέψατε.

Being in a place whence they had a wide proſpect of a cultivated land, he bade them obſerve how God cauſed the ſun to ſhine and the rain to deſcend upon the fields and gardens even of the wicked and ungrateful, and he continued to convey his doctrine to them under rural images, ſpeaking of good trees and corrupt trees, of knowing men by their fruits, of wolves in ſheeps clothing, of grapes not growing upon thorns, nor figs on thiſtles, of the folly of caſting precious things to dogs and ſwine, of † good meaſure preſs'd down, and ſhaken together and running over.

Speaking at the ſame time to people, many of whom were fiſhermen, and lived much upon fiſh, he ſays, *What man of you will give his ſon a ſerpent, if he aſk a fiſh?* Therefore, when he ſaid in the ſame diſcourſe to his diſciples, *Ye are the light of the world; a city that is ſet on a hill cannot be hid*; it is probable that he * pointed to a city within their view ſituated upon the brow of a hill: And when he called them *the ſalt of the earth*, he alluded perhaps to the huſbandmen who were † manuring the ground; and when he compared every perſon who obſerved his precepts to a man who built a houſe upon a rock, which ſtood firm, and every one who ſlighted his words to a man who built his houſe upon the ſand, which was thrown down by the winds and floods ; when he uſed this compariſon, 'tis not improbable that he had before his eyes houſes ſtanding upon high ground, and houſes in the valley in a ruinous condition, which had been deſtroyed by inundations.*

---

* *Solomon*, ſays he, οὐ περιεβάλετο ὡς ἓν τούτων.

† *Matt.* vii. 1. and *Luke* vi. 38.

---

* A few points towards the north appears that which they call *the mount of the Beatitudes*, a ſmall riſing, from which our bleſſed Saviour delivered his Sermon. Not far from this little hill is the city *Saphet*, ſuppoſed to be the antient *Bethulia*: It ſtands upon a very eminent and conſpicuous mountain, and is ſeen far and near. May we not ſuppoſe that Chriſt alludes to this city in thoſe words; *A city ſet on a hill*, &c. Maundrell's *Journey to* Jeruſalem.

Jeruſalem, *Nazareth*, &c. ſtood upon hills.

† With dung, or with aſhes, which abound with ſalts, or with which perhaps ſalt was mixed. *Sale conſperſa ſterileſcunt*, ſays *Grotius*, *unde loca devota et humanis adempta uſibus ſale conſpergi ſolebant.* Too much ſalt may render the earth unfruitful: but a little of it has a contrary effect; and I am told that ſalt is often uſed in manuring. *Virgil* Georg. I. 193.

Semina vidi equidem multos medicare ſerentes,
Et nitro prius, et nigra perfundere amurca,
Grandior ut fœtus ſiliquis fallacibus eſſet.

Of

---

* Going from *Bethany* to *Jeruſalem*, with his diſciples, as they paſſed over a mountain, he ſaid, *If ye ſhall ſay to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou caſt into the ſea, it ſhall be done*, Matt. xxi. 21. In *Luke* xix. 12. he ſpake a parable concerning a nobleman, who went into a far country to receive a kingdom, alluding to that which had happened to *Archelaus* ; Chriſtus hanc ſuam parabolam deſumſit ex more regum ejus ævi, qui beneficio Imperatorum regnabant, potius quam jure natalitium, quales ab Herode Magno in Judæâ fuerant. Non poterant diadema ſumere, niſi juſſu eorum qui Romæ rerum potiebantur. Herodes ille longinquum iter ſuſcepit, ut regnum Judææ ab Antonio impetraret, nec fruſtra ; ivit enim ex Judæa Romam, ut docet *Joſephus* Ant. Jud. XIV. 25, 26, atque inde, τὴν βασιλείαν παραλαβὼν, accepto regno, in Judæam rediit. Iterum iter ſuſcepit, ut ſibi a Cæſare regnum confirmaretur, ut idem Hiſtoricus docet XV. 16. Idem ſucceſſores ejus facere coacti ſunt, quod ab eodem ſcriptore diſcere eſt XVII. 13. Contra hoſce legationes interdum a Judæis Romam miſſæ,

ut

Of theſe obſervations concerning the ſtyle and genius of our Saviour's diſcourſes, the following uſes may be made.

We

---

ut ne regnum illis conferretur, aut etiam auferretur. Sic Archelaum accuſarunt Judæi apud Cæſarem, Romæ, per legatos. Hinc intelligimus rationem, ob quam ita parabola concepta eſt. Archelaus, exempli cauſſâ, erat homo ἐυγενὴς, natus quippe ab Herode. Idem abiit in regionem longinquam (*in Italiam*) accipere ſibi regnum (*Judææ*) et reverti (*in Judæam.*) Cives vero, qui eum oderant, miſerunt legationem poſt illum, dicentes (*apud Cæſarem*) nolumus hunc regnare ſuper nos; quod non potuerunt tamen impetrare. Itaque rediit, accepto regno, ἐθναρχίαν παραλαβὼν, ut loquitur *Joſephus*. Deinde de inimicis, qui noluerant eum regnare ſuper ſe, gravem ultionem ſumſit. *Clericus.*

When he ſays, *Luke* xxii. 25, *The kings of the Gentiles exerciſe lordſhip over them, and they that exerciſe authority upon them are called benefactors,* he alludes to the vanity of ſome wicked Princes in thoſe times, who deſerved the title of *Robbers* much better than of *Benefactors.* Hæc fuit inanis gloria principum illius ævi, ut ἐυεργετῶν vel benefactorum cognomen ambirent, eo ipſo tempore, quo tyrannicè populos regebant; populique proindè adulationis cauſſâ titulum hunc in eos conferebant, aut ut levis beneficii gratiam referrent. Principes ideo urbibus congiaria dividebant, aut eas ædificiis publicis ornabant, aliaque ſimilia faciebant; nec tantum in regno ſuo, ſed etiam apud vicinos. Ita ſe geſſerat Herodes Magnus, non tantum in Judæâ et viciniâ, ſed etiam in mediâ Græciâ, ut Athenis, Lacedæmone, Olympiæ, aliiſque in oppidis, ut docet Joſephus, *Bell. Jud.* I. 16. Exſtat etiamnum Athenis —— inſcriptio baſi ſtatuæ, ut videtur, We may conclude that the writers of the Goſpel have given us always the ſubſtance,

often

---

detur, inſculpta in honorem Berenicæ reginæ, de qua *Act.* xxv. in qua eam vocant Athenienſes Ἰουλίαν Βερενίκην βασίλισσαν μεγάλην Ἰουλίου Ἀγρίππα βασιλέως θυγατέρα, καὶ μεγάλων βασιλέων εὐεργετῶν τῆς πόλεως ἔκγονον· Cernitur idem titulus in nummis antiquis in multos principes collatus.—— *Clericus.*

When the woman of *Samaria*, *Joh.* iv. wondered that he ſhould aſk water of her, he took occaſion to repreſent his doctrine under the image of *living water*, or water which flows from a ſpring.

When he was by the ſea-ſhore, *Matt.* xiii. he ſpake three parables to the people concerning a ſower, becauſe it was then probably ſeed time, as others have obſerved.

At the time of the Paſſover, alluding to it, he ſays, *Joh.* v. 24. *He that heareth my word*, μεταβέβηκεν, *is paſſed from death unto life.* Grot.

When he ſpake of the fig-tree which had born no fruit for three years, and was to be cut down if it produced none the next year, he alluded perhaps to the time that he had ſpent in preaching to the *Jews*, as well as to their obſtinacy, and to the puniſhment which would follow it. *Luke* xiii.

Sir *Iſaac Newton*, Obſervat. on the Prophecies, ſays: Chriſt and his forerunner *John*, in their parabolical diſcourſes, were wont to allude to things preſent. The old prophets, when they would deſcribe things emphatically, did not only draw parables from things which offered themſelves, as from the rent of a garment, 1 *Sam.* xv. from the ſabbatic year, *Iſai.* xxxvii. from the veſſels of a potter, *Jer.* xviii. but alſo, when objects were wanting, they ſupplied them by their own actions, as by rending a garment, 1 *Kings* xi. by ſhooting, 2 *Kings* xiii. by making bare their

body

often the words of our Lord's ſermons.
They

body, *Iſai.* xx. by impoſing ſignificant names to their ſons *Iſai.* viii. *Hoſ.* i. by hiding a girdle in the banks of *Euphrates*, *Jer.* xiii. by breaking a potter's veſſel, *Jer.* xix. by putting on fetters and yokes, *Jer.* xxvii. by binding a book to a ſtone and caſting them both into *Euphrates*, *Jer.* li. by beſieging a painted city, *Ezech.* iv. by dividing their hair into three parts, *Ezech.* v. by making a chain, *Ezech.* vii. by carrying out houſhold ſtuff like a captive and trembling, *Ezech.* xii. By ſuch kind of types the prophets loved to ſpeak. And Chriſt being endued with a nobler prophetic ſpirit than the reſt, excelled alſo in this kind of ſpeaking, yet ſo as not to ſpeak by his own actions, that was leſs grave and decent, but to turn into parables ſuch things as offered themſelves. On occaſion of the harveſt approaching, he admoniſhes his diſciples once and again of the ſpiritual harveſt, *John* iv. 35. *Mat.* ix. 37. Seeing the lilies of the field, he admoniſhes his diſciples about gay clothing, *Mat.* vi. 28. In alluſion to the preſent ſeaſon of fruits, he admoniſhes his diſciples about knowing men by their fruits, *Mat.* vii. 16. In the time of the paſſover, when trees put forth leaves, he bids his diſciples learn a parable from the fig-tree: When its branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that ſummer is nigh, *&c.* *Mat.* xxiv. 32. *Luke* xxi. 29. The ſame day, alluding to both the ſeaſon of the year and to his paſſion, which was to be two days after, he formed a parable of the time of the fruits approaching, and the murdering of the heir, *Mat.* xxi. 33. Alluding at the ſame time, both to the money-changers whom he had newly driven out of the temple, and to his paſſion at hand, he made a parable of a nobleman going into a far country to receive a kingdom and return, and delivering his goods to his ſervants, and at his return condemning the ſlothful ſervant, becauſe he put not his money to the exchangers, *Mat.* xxv. 14. *Luke* xix. 12. Being near the temple, where ſheep were kept in folds to be ſold for the ſacrifices, he ſpake many things parabolically of ſheep, of the ſhepherd, and of the door of the ſheepfold; and diſcovers that he alluded to the ſheepfolds which were to be hired in the market-place, by ſpeaking of ſuch folds as a thief could not enter by the door, nor the ſhepherd himſelf open, but a porter opened to the ſhepherd, *John* x. 1. 3. Being in the mount of Olives, *Mat.* xxvi. 30. *John* xiv. 31. a place ſo fertile that it could not want vines, he ſpake many things myſtically of the huſbandman, and of the vine and its branches, *John* xv. Meeting a blind man, he admoniſhed of ſpiritual blindneſs, *John* ix. 39. At the ſight of little children he deſcribed once and again the innocence of the elect, *Mat.* xviii. 2. xix. 13. Knowing that *Lazarus* was dead and ſhould be raiſed again, he diſcourſed of the reſurrection and life eternal, *John* xi. 25, 26. Hearing of the ſlaughter of ſome whom *Pilate* had ſlain, he admoniſhed of eternal death, *Luke* xiii. 1. To his fiſhermen he ſpake of fiſhers of men, *Mat.* iv. 10. and compoſed another parable about fiſhes, *Mat.* xiii. 47. Being by the temple, he ſpake of the temple of his body, *John* ii. 19. At ſupper he ſpake a parable about the myſtical ſupper to come in the kingdom of heaven, *Luke* xiv. On occaſion of temporal food, he admoniſhed his diſciples of ſpiritual food, and of eating his fleſh and drinking his blood myſtically, *John* vi. 27, 53. When his diſciples wanted bread, he bad them beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, *Mat.* xvi. 6. Being deſired to eat, he anſwered that he had other meat, *John* iv. 31. In the great day of the feaſt of tabernacles, when the *Jews*, as their cuſtom them to * him. If they had followed this method, they would probably have made for him diſcourſes exhorting to virtue and diſſuading from vice in general terms; it would not have entered into their thoughts to have crouded together ſo many alluſions to time and place, and to other little occurrences, which nothing, beſides the preſence of the objects, could ſuggeſt.

We may alſo plainly ſee in the diſcourſes of Jeſus Chriſt his great deſign, which was

was, brought a great quantity of waters from the river *Siloah* into the temple, Chriſt ſtood and cried, ſaying, If any man thirſt, let him come to me, and drink. He that believeth in me, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water, *John* vii. 37. (*So alſo* Grotius) The next day, in alluſion to the ſervants who by reaſon of the ſabbatical year were newly ſet free, he ſaid; If ye continue in my word, the truth ſhall make you free: Which the *Jews* underſtanding literally with reſpect to the preſent manumiſſion of ſervants, anſwered, We be *Abraham*'s ſeed, and were never in bondage to any man: how ſayeſt thou, ye ſhall be made free? *John* viii.— And I doubt not but divers other parables were formed upon ſeveral occaſions, the *hiſtory* of which we have not.

See Mr. *Whiſton*'s Remarks on Sir *Iſ. N.* ch. xi. in his *Six Diſſertations.*

* As *Plato*, who is juſtly ſuppoſed to have often given his own thoughts and words to his maſter *Socrates*; and as *Greek* and *Latin* Hiſtorians never ſcrupled to do, who introduce the great men, of whom they write, making long harangues, of which they never uttered one word.

to inſtruct. Therefore he conveys knowledge in a familiar way, he adapts his language to his hearers, he ſpeaks to their eyes, and to their ears, he chuſes images and compariſons which would ſtrike them moſt powerfully, and make a laſting impreſſion upon their minds.

The words of Jeſus Chriſt being thus ſuppoſed to be genuine, we may from them not unreaſonably conclude that he was a prophet ſent from God for the benefit of mankind.

In his diſcourſes appear a profound veneration of almighty God, an earneſt deſire of promoting his honour, noble and juſt ſentiments of his power, wiſdom, goodneſs, juſtice and providence, and a ſubmiſſive reſignation to his will under great afflictions.

From them may be gathered a ſyſtem of moſt pure and ſtrict morality, the obſervance of which, as our Lord declares, would expoſe his followers to many inconveniences and much ill uſage, and ſhould not be fully recompenſed before the next ſtate,

In them is ſeen his prudence and wiſdom in expoſing ſuperſtition and hypocriſy, in inducing men to repentance ſometimes by amiable repreſentations of God's mercy, ſometimes by awful declarations of his juſtice, and in ſhunning oſtentation and applauſe.

In them appears charity, condeſcenſion, affability, love and pity to mankind.

From his diſcourſes we may conclude that his * behaviour was ſuitable to them; for if his deeds had contradicted his words, he would have been deſpiſed, and could have made no diſciples.

From his diſcourſes therefore and his behaviour, as they are recorded in the Goſpels, we may conclude that he was, as he declared himſelf to be, the Son of God. If we ſhould ſuppoſe him to have been an impoſtor and a falſe prophet, a character would ariſe full of ſuch contradiction and inconſiſtency, of ſuch prudence and folly, of ſuch

---

* It was well obſerved by *Origen*; that amongſt the many ſlanders which had been forged and uttered againſt Jeſus by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, none had dared to accuſe him of having offended in the ſlighteſt degree againſt purity and chaſtity, and that Spite and Calumny itſelf had ſpared that part of his character. *οὗ μηδὲ οἱ μυρία κατηγορήσαντες, καὶ ψευδῆ ὅσα περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες, δεδύνηνται κατειπεῖν, ὡς κᾂν τὸ τυχὸν ἀκολασίας κᾂν ἐπ' ὀλίγον γευσαμένου. Contr. Celſ.* III. p. 132.

knowledge and ignorance, of ſuch goodneſs and wickedneſs; as never appeared in the world before or ſince.

Another proof which the writings of the New Teſtament afford of their own authority ariſes from the prophecies contained in them. We find there predictions of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and of the converſion of the *Gentiles* by the ſpeedy and extenſive propagation of the Goſpel.

VI. If we ſhould ſuppoſe that the writers of the New Teſtament had no extraordinary aſſiſtance from God in compoſing their books and epiſtles, the prophetic parts excepted, the truth of the Chriſtian religion in general might ſtill be proved; there would ſtill be ſufficient evidence that Chriſt came from God to teach men to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and piouſly; that he wrought miracles, that he died and roſe again, that his Apoſtles received ſupernatural powers by which they were enabled to propagate the Goſpel.

The writers of the New Teſtament were Apoſtles, or companions of the Apoſtles, who had converſed with Chriſt, who ſpent their time in converting men to the Chriſtian religion and in preſiding over the Church, who preached a more perfect morality than had been taught before, who lived ſuitably to their own doctrines, and many of whom laid down their lives in teſtimony of the truth. Conſequently we may eſteem them honeſt men and faithful hiſtorians. But ſince an honeſt man may poſſibly miſtake, not indeed in facts which he affirms to be true upon his own knowledge, but in inferences from thoſe facts, in precepts and doctrines, or in delivering the ſentiments of others, if we can ſay no more in behalf of the writers of the New Teſtament, their authority will be only human. There ſeems requiſite ſomething beſides a good life and a mind purified from paſſion and prejudice to qualify them to be the firſt teachers of a new revelation, namely a Divine aſſiſtance which we call inſpiration.

How far, and in what degree the Apoſtles were inſpired, is not eaſy to determine, nor conſequently neceſſary to be known. Thus much we may affirm, that they were * aſſiſted of God to give us a faithful account of the things which we ought to believe and to perform, that we may obtain eternal life.†

---

[*] Spiritus ſanctus Apoſtolos et Evangeliſtas confirmavit in doctrinâ Evangelicâ: in cæteris rebus, ut hominibus, reliquit quæ ſunt hominum. *Grotius* ad *Act.* vii. 3.

[†] The divine Providence has not judged it proper to conduct us to eternal life by operating irreſiſtibly upon our heart, or by offering invincible evidence to our underſtanding, or by ſecuring us from all miſtake, or by delivering us from all doubt. The firſt teachers of Chriſtianity were not appointed to publiſh an edition or tranſlation of the Old Teſtament which ſhould correct every little tranſpoſition, &c. that had entered into it, nor to explain every prophecy and ſolve every difficulty contained in it, nor to give a catalogue of all the ſacred books extant in their time, nor to explain ſome things which themſelves have delivered obſcurely and in part, nor to write books in which there ſhould be nothing hard to be underſtood and of uncertain ſignification. The divine Wiſdom has not judged it neceſſary to preſerve the copies of the New Teſtament from the errors of tranſcribers and tranſlators, or to raiſe up a ſucceſſion of prophets to determine the controverſies ariſing in the Church. But the great truths of natural and revealed religion, and the great duties of life, and the divine power, wiſdom and goodneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, and the miraculous and prophetic teſtimony of the holy Ghoſt, and the ſacred authority of the Apoſtles, are clearly taught in the Scriptures, and ſupported with an evidence ſufficient to ſatiſfy a rational enquirer. For thoſe whom this evidence will not move, God has provided no remedy.

For (1.) The Apoſtles had a promiſe of divine aſſiſtance upon certain occaſions. *When they deliver you up*, ſays Chriſt, *take no thought how or what ye ſhall ſpeak, for it is not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father which ſpeaketh in you.* Whence we may reaſon thus; If the Apoſtles were to receive from the holy Ghoſt a ſkill to ſpeak what was proper when they appeared in public to defend Chriſtianity, we may ſuppoſe that they were guided by the ſame Spirit in their writings; becauſe this was of greater importance, and more worthy of the Divine interpoſition. By ſpeaking juſtly they might confute ſome adverſaries, preſerve themſelves and their religion from the contempt of their hearers, and convert and confirm that part of the aſſembly which had good diſpoſitions; whereas their writings were deſigned for the ſervice not of four or five hundred men, but of all ages and nations.

(2.) Our Saviour promiſed his Apoſtles that the holy Ghoſt ſhould continually abide with them, that he ſhould lead them into all truth, and that in particular he ſhould bring to their remembrance whatſoever Chriſt had ſaid unto them; which will appear to have been neceſſary, if we conſider that the Goſpels conſiſt in a great meaſure of the diſcourſes of Chriſt, that Chriſt converſed with them at leaſt for three years, that they had at that time very imperfect notions of the religion which he came to teach, and of the office to which they ſhould be appointed; and that in all probability they had not * collected materials for the Goſpels, or ſet down his diſcourſes, whilſt he was with them.

(3.) Our Lord told his diſciples that they were not then diſpoſed to receive and underſtand ſome truths which the holy Ghoſt ſhould afterwards reveal to them; and the Apoſtles have taught us ſome things which are not to be found in the Goſpels, or are not clearly delivered there, as, the deſign and the abolition of the ceremonial law, certain relative duties, and ſome particulars concerning the worſhip of God

---

* When Chriſt, after his reſurrection, ſent forth his Apoſtles, he gave them no command to write.

and the regulation of Chriſtian ſocieties or churches.

It is therefore a vain diſtinction which ſome have attempted to make between the precepts or doctrines of Chriſt and thoſe of the Apoſtles, as if leſs regard were to be paid to the latter than to the former. Our Saviour ſeems plainly to equal the Apoſtles to himſelf, as teachers, commands all men to receive them, to hear them, and to pay the ſame deference to them as to him.

(4.) Laſtly, the Apoſtles * upon ſeveral occaſions affirm that they had an extraordinary guidance of the holy Spirit; they declare that they had received their doctrines, not from men, but from Jeſus Chriſt, and that every one who pretended to inſpiration muſt acknowledge this, or ought to paſs for an impoſtor, if he owned it not. They ſay that they had the mind of *Chriſt*; they call their doctrine the word of God and of Chriſt, the commandment of God and of the Lord, the wiſdom of God, the wiſdom which God had revealed to them by his Spirit, and words which the holy Ghoſt had taught them, the teſtimony of God, the Goſpel of God by which men ſhould be judged: they aſſert that they are of God, that he who knoweth God heareth them, and that he who heareth them not is not of God.

---

* *Rom.* ii. 16. Cor. I. ii. 7. 10. 12, 13. xiv. 37. *Epheſ.* iii. 3. 5. *Theſſ.* I. ii. 13. iv. 15. *Joh.* I. iv. 6. &c. See *Whitby* Gen. Pref. Vol. I.

VII. It cannot be denied that the Scriptures * are often obſcure and difficult, as for example, where the ſubject is prophecy or controverſy, where words and phraſes are uſed which are not to be found in other authors, and are now become of uncertain ſignification, and where doctrines are revealed not fully, but in part. Beſides the obſcurity ariſing from the ſubject and the ſtyle, the Scriptures have other

---

* There are thoſe, to whom nothing of this kind is obſcure, and who determine the moſt difficult points without heſitation; happy, in never feeling the uneaſineſs of doubt and ſuſpenſe,

Felices errore ſuo!

but in ſome danger of being elated with pride; as the ears of corn, which are emptieſt, carry their heads the higheſt.

difficulties common to all books which are very ancient and written in dead languages.

But many parts of the Scriptures are clear, and particularly thoſe which relate to * morality, to practical religion.

When we ſay that the Scriptures are clear in many places, the meaning is that they will be clear to thoſe who take the proper methods to underſtand them, and ſeek inſtruction, and pray to God for direction and aſſiſtance, and are deſirous to obey and pleaſe him.

Perſons of diſpoſitions equally good, will underſtand more or leſs of the Scriptures according to their ſeveral capacities and † opportunities;

---

* In iis quæ unicuique neceſſaria ſunt creditu, ſperatu, factu, valdè eſt perſpicua Scriptura. In cæteris quantâ opus ſit cognitione linguarum, collatione verſionum, quanto labore, experti ſunt veteres, et nunc experiuntur qui in eo deſudant. *Grotius* Annot. ad Conſult. *Caſſand.*

† They who ſay that human learning is of no uſe in religion, are no more to be diſputed with than the honeſt man in *Horace*,

Qui ſe credebat miros audire tragœdos,
In vacuo lætus ſeſſor plauſorque theatro.

He who ſtrives and expects to convince and alter ſuch perſons, either undervalues his time and pains, or overvalues his abilities.

portunities; and that degree of knowledge, which in the poor and illiterate were highly commendable, would be groſs and vitious ignorance in thoſe of higher rank, of more leiſure, learning, and abilities.

The ignorance of ſome people in matters of religion is aſtoniſhing, and the only excuſes which can be offered for it, namely want of capacity, or want of * leiſure, are often groundleſs; for the knowledge required of every perſon cannot be greater than his abilities, and the † abilities of many perſons are greater than they think. The underſtanding muſt be exerciſed before its ſtrength can be known, and by exerciſe it may be improved beyond imagination; and as to leiſure, § there are few even

---

Sola Scripturarum ars eſt, *ſays Jerome*, quam ſibi omnes paſſim vendicant; hanc garrula anus, hanc delirus ſenex, hanc ſophiſta verboſus, hanc univerſi præſumunt, lacerant, docent antequam diſcant.

What would he ſay,

Si foret hoc noſtrum fato dilatus in ævum?

* Virorum nugæ, negotia vocantur. *Auguſtin* Confeſſ. I. 9.

† See *Locke* Conduct of the Underſt. § 4.

§. Much buſineſs is no excuſe for neglecting him in whom we live and move and have our being. Every Chriſtian ſhould even of thoſe who are engaged in a laborious way of life, who have not many hours which are a burden to them, or are conſumed in a manner that hurts their ſouls and their bodies.

Common people are not to be encouraged to ſpend that time in religious exerciſes which is due to the care of their families, nor to make piety a cloke for lazineſs, nor to be contentious about things which they underſtand not; but if they would beſtow a ſeventh part of their time and of their induſtry in the improvement of their hearts and minds, and in religious meditations, they would find their advantage in it many ways; they would probably avoid ſeveral ſins which ruin them even in this world, they would be more honeſt, more ſober, more civil, and more induſtrious, and conſequently meet with more encouragement and kindneſs from their ſuperiors, they would find more divine aſ-

---

ſhould be able to apply to himſelf in a religious ſenſe the words of *Julius Cæſar* in *Lucan*:

——— media inter prælia, ſemper
Stellarum cœlique plagis, Superiſque vacavi.

See *Epictet*, Sentent, 102, 103, 104. p. 141. *Ed. Reland.*

ſiſtance, more comfort, more peace of mind and reſignation in all circumſtances; and they would not be, what ſeveral of them now are, guilty of ſo many faults, and expoſed to ſo many evils, that it is hard to ſay whether they are more wicked or more miſerable.

VII.

The Goſpel conſidered as it is grace and truth.

ST. *John* tells us that grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt, that he brought them into the world, and that they are contained in the revelation of God's will of which he was the author.

I. The Goſpel is frequently called grace; and this word has ſeveral meanings, all of which may be applied to the Goſpel.

1. The word *grace*, in its moſt obvious acceptation, means favour, favour flowing from mercy and beneficence, to which the perſon who receives it can make no claim, as of right. In this ſenſe the Goſpel is moſt particularly and emphatically grace in all and every part of it, it is a gift of God which we could not in any manner be ſaid to deſerve,

2. The Goſpel is grace as it promiſeth to * repenting ſinners not only an exemption from puniſhment, but a reſurrection to eternal happineſs; and our Saviour ſhewed ſo much tenderneſs and lenity, and gave ſo much encouragement to all in whom he diſcovered diſpoſitions towards amendment, that he drew upon himſelf from the cenſorious *Jews* the opprobrious name of the friend of ſinners and of † Publicans, a name which he was very willing to accept, declaring that he came into the world for the ſake of ſuch perſons, and that

---

* It was an unreaſonable objection made to Chriſtianity by *Julian* in his *Cæſars*, and by *Celſus* in *Orig.* III. p. 147. that by offering pardon to repenting ſinners it favoured immorality, and ſet open the kingdom of heaven to vice and folly. *Zoſimus* II. p. 61. inſinuates the ſame thing, and ſays that *Conſtantine* had recourſe to Chriſtianity after the *Pagan* prieſts had told him that their religion afforded no purgation for ſuch heinous crimes as he had committed. See *Phileleuth. Lipſienſ.* P. II. p. 20.

† Πάντες τελῶναι πάντες εἰσὶν ἅρπαγες.
Quot publicani, tot raptores.

See *Digeſt.* L. xxxix. 12. The Emperor *Veſpaſian*'s father was an exception to this proverb, who was at the ſame time a Publican and a man of honour, and of whom *Suetonius* relates, ——— *publicum quadrageſimæ in Aſiâ egit. Manebantque imagines a civitatibus ei poſitæ, cum hoc titulo,* Καλῶς τελωνήσαντι. Veſpas. 1.

the buſineſs of his life was to ſeek and ſave them.

Repentance is indeed a duty of natural religion, and reaſon gives us hopes that it may be advantageous to us.

For as it is certain that ſin is evil and deteſtable, and diſpleaſing to God, it is no leſs evident that to confeſs and diſlike and condemn our faults, to avoid them for the future, to amend whatſoever is blameable in our conduct, to practiſe the duties which we have neglected, are actions good in themſelves and acceptable to God, and therefore cannot be unprofitable to us.

Beſides, we find our ſelves * able to change, as from better to worſe, ſo from worſe to better. Now certainly it is not to

no

---

* This freedom neither excludes the Divine aſſiſtance, nor renders it unneceſſary: Man unqueſtionably receives all his powers from his Maker, and continually ſtands in need of his aid, for the performance of his duty.

If we can neither think nor act otherwiſe than we do, or rather, if we cannot act, in a true ſenſe, but are actuated by ſomething external, we muſt be juſt what we are, and power and choice belong not to us. Let us be concerned about nothing, if our concern ſignifies nothing; ſo adviſes the Poët and Fataliſt;

Solvite,

no purpoſe that we enjoy this power. It ſeems therefore probable that God, who has made us beings capable of amendment, will ſhew ſome favour to us if for the time to come we carefully endeavour to deſerve it.

To this may be added the conſideration of the great goodneſs of God. We account it commendable in men to forgive offences when the offender owns his fault, and offers ſuch reparation as he is able to make, and changes his behaviour. But God muſt ſurpaſs us in goodneſs no leſs than in all other perfections.

Solvite, mortales, animos, curaſque levate,
Totque ſupervacuis vitam deplete querelis.
Fata regunt orbem, certâ ſtant omnia lege.
Manilius IV. 13.

But the advice ſeems to come with an ill grace from a Fataliſt, and men might return the Poët this anſwer upon his own principles;

Deſine nos monitis, Vates, illudere vanis;
Hoc quoque fatale eſt, triſtes effundere queſtus,
Incaſſum, et curis nil proficientibus angi.

Homo, as *Grotius* well obſerves, ſolus ad imaginem Dei conditus dicitur, hoc eſt, mente liberoque arbitrio præditus, quod fundamentum eſt dominationis ipſius in cæteras creaturas. Non poteſt enim rerum aliarum eſſe dominus, qui ſuarum actionum dominus non ſit. *De Satisfact.*

The ſame favourable concluſions may alſo be drawn from the weakneſs of human nature, which though it be no excuſe for ſtubborn diſobedience, yet ſeems to render the penitent proper objects of Divine mercy. If man were not a creature expoſed to many violent temptations, frail, and eaſily ſeduced, certainly ſome would be found of unſpotted innocence and integrity. But it is evident that the very beſt offend in many things. We muſt therefore conclude, either that God requires unſinning obedience, and will ſpare none of the race of mankind, which cannot be ſuppoſed, or that he will not be extreme to mark what is done amiſs.

Laſtly, the end and deſign of puniſhment is to be conſidered. To puniſh for revenge, and only that the offender may become miſerable, is a conduct unworthy of a good and wiſe being. Puniſhment ſhould be inflicted either * for the profit and amendment of the offender, or for the good of the whole, or for both. But if God ſhould

---

* *Plato* de Leg. ix. et xi. Gorg. et Protag. *Seneca* de Clem. I. 16. *A. Gellius* VI. 14.

puniſh repenting ſinners very rigorouſly, and never pardon them, nothing uſeful could ariſe from their ſufferings; not their own amendment, nor the improvement of their fellow-creatures, who could only be terrified and driven to deſpair by ſuch examples.

These ſeem to be the ſuggeſtions of human reaſon left to itſelf, concerning the profitableneſs of repentance and reformation. But the utmoſt that a man can conclude without the aſſiſtance of revelation, is, that it ſhall be much better for him in a future ſtate, if he amends his life, than if he continues wicked. Thus far reaſon goes, and no farther.

But though repentance be, as we have obſerved, a part of natural religion, yet it ſeems to have been little practiſed by many of the *Gentiles*. *Amendment of

life

---

* Referamur illuc, unde non decuit prius
Abire: vel nunc caſta repetatur fides.
Nam ſera nunquam eſt ad bonos mores via.
Quem pœnitet peccaſſe; pæne eſt innocens.

Seneca Agamemn.

Λόγος——ὀρθῶς γίγνοιτο ἡμῖν, προαγορεύων ἐξίστασθαι πᾶσι τοῖς ἀσέβεσι τρόπων τῶν αὐτῶν εἰς τοὺς ἐυσεβεῖς.——

[*Sermo*

life is a comely and commendable thing, and the *Pagans* certainly approved it; but that part of repentance which is a religious ſorrow, and acknowledgment of paſt offences to God our maker and governor, and prayers to him to forgive them, the Gentiles ſeem in a great meaſure to have overlooked, both in the courſe of their life, and at the * cloſe of it.

The

Sermo — rectè ſequitur, qui impiis omnibus prædicet, ut a ſuis moribus ad pietatem ſeſe convertant. Plato, *de Leg.* X.

When a man has taken ill courſes, ſays *Cebes*, he becomes miſerable for the remaining part of his life, unleſs *Repentance* interpoſes, by whoſe friendly aſſiſtance he is ſaved, and made happy. τὸν λοιπὸν ϐίον καταςρέφει ἐν πάσῃ κακοδαιμονίᾳ, ἂν μὴ Μετάνοια αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τῆς τύχης συναντήσῃ, — εἶτα — ἐξαίρει αὐτὸν ἐκ τῶν κακῶν, —— [ϗ] σώζεται, ϗ μακάειος ϗ εὐδαίμων γίγνεται —— *Tabul. Cebet.*

That ſome *Pagans* had and have ſome notions of the efficacy of repentance, ſee in *Huet*, Alnet. Quæſt. II. 20. p. 275. III. 14. 369, 370.

* The [*Christian*] doctrine of repentance Nature never taught in her ſchool, neither was it ever found in the Books of the learned, &c. *John Hale*'s Serm. on St. *Peter*'s fall.

The lady in the iſland *Cea*, of whom *Val. Maximus* tells a remarkable ſtory, recommended her ſelf before ſhe drank poiſon to the favour of *Mercury*; but we find not that ſhe made any acknowledgment of ſins, or aſked forgiveneſs of the Gods: *Tum defuſis Mercurio delibamentis, et invocato numine ejus, ut ſe placido itinere in meliorem ſedis infernæ de-*

The Law of *Moſes* appointed expiations and ſacrifices for ſome offences; and for ſome offences it appointed none.

The

---

duceret partem, cupido hauſu mortiferam traxit potionem. II. VI. 8.

That this recommendatory prayer to *Mercury* was not uncommon, we may conjecture from *Sophocles,* who makes *Ajax* ſay, before he falls on his ſword, 838.

> —— καλῶ δ' ἅμα
> Πομπαῖον Ἑρμῆν χθόνιον εὖ με κοιμίσαι,
> Ξὺν ἀσφαδάστῳ ϗ ταχεῖ πηδήματι,
> Πλευρὰν διαῤῥήξαντα τῷδε φασγάνῳ.

• In his *Oedipus Colon.* 1552. the Chorus prays to the infernal Gods, that they would grant that unhappy prince an eaſy death and a quiet paſſage to their dominions:

> Εἰ θέμις ἐστί μοι τὰν ἀφανῆ θεὸν
> Καὶ σὲ λιταῖς σεβίζειν
> Ἐννυχίων ἄναξ, &c.

Socrates, holding the cup in his hand, ſaid —— *this however is lawful and right, to pray to the Gods that my departing from this ſtate to another, may be happy. So I pray, and ſo be it.* —— ἀλλ' εὔχεσθαι γέ που τοῖς θεοῖς ἔξεστί τε ϗ χρὴ, τὴν μετοίκησιν τὴν ἐνθένδε ἐκεῖσε εὐτυχῆ γενέσθαι· ἃ δὴ ϗ ἐγὼ εὔχομαί τε, ϗ γένοιτο ταύτῃ. —— *Plato* Phæd. 66.

Theſe prayers were called ἐξιτήριοι εὐχαὶ, as Mr. *Forſter* has obſerved in his note on this paſſage.

Peregrinus, εἶπεν, Δαίμονες μητρῷοι ϗ πατρῷοι, [illegible]ξασθέ με εὐμενεῖς. ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἐπήδησεν εἰς τὸ πῦρ. [illegible]*it; O materni atque paterni Dæmones, ſuſcipite me propitii. Quibus dictis* [illegible] *ignem inſiliit.* Lucian, *de Mort. Per.*

See

The Prophets exhorted ſinners in general to return to God, and declared, that a broken and contrite heart God would not reject.

See the prayer in *Euripides*,

Σοὶ τῶν πάντων μεδέοντι ——

cited and commended by *Clemens Alex*. Strom. V. p. 688.

From a ſurvey of the devotions of the *Gentiles* it will appear that, ſome inſtances excepted, there was nothing ſpiritual in their prayers, no thankſgiving, no requeſt for divine aſſiſtance in the performance of their duty, no pious ſorrow and acknowledgment of their offences.

After the propagation of the Chriſtian religion, we find forms of adoration in ſome *Pagan* writers, which are more rational and ſpiritual than the old Hymns and prayers of their anceſtors; and we may reaſonably ſuppoſe that theſe improvements aroſe from the Goſpel. See *Procl*. Hymn. ad Solem, et ad Muſas; *Jamblich*. de Myſt. Ægypt. §. 5. c. 26; *Simplic*. in *Epictet. ad fin*. to whom I wiſh I could add *Maximus Tyrius*. It is pity that he, who on other accounts deſerves commendation, ſhould have taught that prayer to God was ſuperfluous, *Diſc*. 30. See alſo *Juvenal*, x. 346. and the Commentators.

Seneca ſays, *Primus eſt deorum cultus, deos credere: deinde reddere illis majeſtatem ſuam, reddere bonitatem.—— Vis deos propitiare? bonus eſto. Satis illos coluit quiſquis imitatus eſt.* Epiſt. 95. p. 470. But that he did not think prayer to be uſeleſs and unneceſſary, as ſome may fancy from theſe words, will appear from the following places. *Nos quoque exiſtimamus vota proficere, ſalvâ vi et poteſtate fatorum. Quædam enim a Diis immortalibus ita ſuſpenſa relicta ſunt, ut in bonum vertant, ſi admotæ Diis preces fuerint, ſi vota ſuſcepta.* Nat. Quæſt. II. 57. *Itaque non dat Deus beneficia, — non exaudit precantium voces et undique ſublatis in* reject and deſpiſe, even where no ſacrifices had been appointed, or would be accepted by him. But that repentance ſhall open a way for us to eternal life, is clearly taught only in the Goſpel.

3. The Goſpel is grace, as it promiſes us, if we humbly and ſincerely deſire it, the Divine aſſiſtance, which ſhall comfort us in afflictions, and ſupport us under temptations, and enable us to work out our ſalvation, and to paſs ſafely through this ſtate of trial to a ſtate of happineſs.

4. The Goſpel may be called grace with reſpect to the manner in which it was revealed. The Law, which was a ſeverer inſtitution, was delivered with an awful pomp and majeſty, that might ſtrike a terror into the people, and work powerfully upon their fears, and extort obedience from them by the dread of puniſhment. But the Goſpel, the covenant of peace, made its appearance with mildneſs and condeſcenſion.

---

cælum manibus vota facientium privata ac publica. Quod profecto non fieret, nec in hunc furorem omnes mortales conſenſiſſent alloquendi ſurda numina et inefficaces Deos, niſi noſſent illorum beneficia nunc ultro oblata, nunc orantibus data. De Benef. IV. 4.

It was introduced by the Son of God converſing familiarly with men, teaching them by his doctrine and example, willing with great patience to bear with their imperfections and weakneſſes, and to guide them gently to virtue and knowledge by plain and repeated inſtructions.

5. The Goſpel is grace, as it contains righteous and equitable laws. The duties towards God, which it requires of us, are a reaſonable ſervice which we are bound in gratitude to perform, Our duty to our neighbour, as it is there laid down, promotes the happineſs of mankind, renders us uſeful in every ſtation, raiſes us up friends, and makes us paſs our days with tranquillity and reputation. The duty which it teaches us to our ſelves tends to moderate our unruly paſſions and ſubdue thoſe worſt enemies to our repoſe, to preſerve our mind quiet, and our underſtanding clear, and capable of exerting its natural powers. Theſe duties it ſo enjoins and explains, that if any Chriſtian be ignorant of them, it muſt be by his own wilful and great negligence. To theſe it adds baptiſm

and the ſupper of the Lord, of which the firſt is performed once, and never afterwards repeated, and the ſecond, as to the frequency of receiving it, is ſo far left to our own diſcretion, that it can never interfere with any moral duty, or hinder us from performing any thing that is truly profitable and commendable. Whatſoever was burdenſome in the Law of *Moſes* was taken away by the Goſpel, which is called the law of liberty, as it removed that yoke from the *Jews*, and impoſed it not upon the *Gentiles*. The ceremonial ordinances are aboliſhed, and in their ſtead a plain and ſpiritual worſhip of God takes place.

6. The Goſpel is grace, as it is a gift offered to all, an invitation from which none are excluded. It does not, like the Law of *Moſes*, diſtinguiſh one nation from another; it is a religion confined in none of its rites to particular places and people, but fitted for univerſal uſe.

It is true indeed, that many nations have been and are ignorant of it, and that it has not been publiſhed to the whole world.

God has not thought proper to acquaint us with the reaſons why he permits this *, but [illegible] may be certain that, though we cannot ſearch out all the ways of God, yet perfect wiſdom does nothing unfit, and perfect goodneſs nothing unmerciful. We know, and this knowledge is ſufficient, that God is repreſented in Scripture, as the common Father of Mankind, who is good to all his creatures, and incapable of prejudice and partiality, and not willing that any ſhould periſh; that every one ſhall be accepted according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not; that to every one is given a light to guide him, and a law, either written or unwritten, either revelation or reaſon, by which he ſhall be judged.

7. Grace in ſome places of the New Teſtament means thoſe extraordinary powers which the holy Ghoſt conferred upon the Apoſtles and firſt believers, by which they were enabled to convert *Jews* and *Gen-*

---

* Chriſtianity is to be accounted as a favour; and for favour it is not neceſſary to aſſign any reaſon, beſides the will of the ſupreme Donour.

tiles, and to inſtruct Chriſtians, and to give a ſufficient teſtimony to the truth of the Goſpel.

8, Laſtly, grace ſometimes means goodneſs or moral virtue. In this ſenſe the Goſpel is grace, as it ſets morality in a clear light, and enforces the practice of it by the beſt and moſt effectual motives; as it produced, when it was firſt preached, a wonderful and happy change in the behaviour of thoſe who received it, and as it continues ſtill to make Chriſtians, if not ſo good as they ought to be, yet far better than they would have been without it.

It will look like diſſimulation and inſincerity to paſs by an argument ſo often urged againſt the Goſpel, as it is grace, namely the doctrine of future puniſhments contained in it.

At this ſad thought, ſay they, all theſe fair and pleaſing ideas of heavenly grace and overflowing benevolence ſeem to droop and fade away, and the ſoul, rather than be expoſed to the bare poſſibility of undergoing ſuch evils, would willingly

† take refuge in a ſilent everlaſting inſenſibility, [illegible] would have choſen not to have b[illegible]ll, if ſuch a choice could be ſuppoſ[illegible]d po[illegible]ble, rather than to have been called [illegible]ort[illegible] into being on ſuch dangerous terms.

That God is good, ſeems to be a ſufficient anſwer. At preſent, objections muſt be impertinent, and ſolutions imperfect. Let us wait till the righteous Judge appears, and then theſe and many other difficulties will be removed. In the mean time we may reſt ſatisfied with this, that ſin ſhall neither enjoy an impunity irreconcileable with God's juſtice and majeſty, nor endure ſufferings inconſiſtent with his mercy and clemency.

It is, I think, generally ſuppoſed that there will be a great variety of puniſhments. To be deprived of ſome good which by a proper conduct might have been ſecured and obtained, if it be attended with diſſatisfaction or regret, is certainly a punishment; and if it always laſts, [illegible] eternal punishment. He who is in this condition, has loſt his rank, and is placed far beneath many of thoſe who were once his equals, without a * poſſibility of retrieving the loſs.

---

† Did I requeſt thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man, did I ſollicit thee
From darkneſs to promote me? ——— &c.
—— Him after all diſputes
Forc'd I abſolve.

Milton Par. Loſt. X.

No leſs various may be the recompenſes. The inexhauſtible Fountain of good has *more than one bleſſing*. He has gifts of a lower ſort for thoſe who are not worthy *to ſit down on the right* or *on the left hand* of his Son. *In his houſe are many* † *manſions*, in his wide-extended kingdom there may be habitations, remote perhaps from his throne, yet not beyond his favourable influences, ſituated within the realms of light, and appointed for beings of moderate improvements, but of good inclinations, who ſhall be permitted to adore him at a * diſtance.

---

* ——— fruſtra ſectabere canthum,
Cum rota poſterior curras, et in axe ſecundo.
Perſius, V. 71.

† Multa in theſauris Patris eſt habitatio, Chriſte,
Diſparibus diſcreta locis, non poſco beata
In regione domum, &c.
Prudentius Hamartig. 952.

We have conſidered the Goſpel as it is grace; let us now, ſecondly, view it as it is truth.

The Goſpel is frequently called the truth.

I. It is ſo called in oppoſition to the † falſehood of *Paganiſm*, which had overſpread the world. The ignorance of the *Pagans*, and the errors into which their vices had led them, are repreſented in the New Teſtament by the ſtrongeſt expreſſions. It is there ſaid that they knew not God, that they did not like to retain him in their knowledge, and that they were without God in the world. The meaning of which ſeems not to be that the *Gentiles* were all atheiſts, and abſolutely and wholly ignorant of God, but that they glorified him not as God; for as in the language of the Scriptures, to know God is to obey him;

---

* ——— with whom would I
Gladly behold though but his utmoſt ſkirts
Of glory, and far off his ſteps adore.

† Falſe Gods are called *lies* in Scripture. *Grotius* on *Rom.* I. 25

ſo not to know him, is not to honour him, and all wicked men are called unbelievers and men who know not God. [illegible] *Gentiles* had not indeed quite loſt all notions of the excellence and perfections of the Divine nature; they generally acknowledged one ſupreme God, and ſome thought him to be as good and wiſe as he was powerful; but * with him they adored inferior † Deities. To theſe many *Gentiles* aſcribed

---

* Some philoſophers, at laſt, in their refinements upon religion, repreſented the ſupreme God as above all adoration, and not to be worſhipped, like inferior deities, by prayers and praiſes, but only by a ſilent ſort of contemplation. *Conſtat. ex L.* 4. *Cyrilli contra Julianum, Porphyrium exiſtimaſſe ſolos deos mundanos colendos eſſe, non autem Supremum illum. Fuit et hæc plurimorum ex ſcholâ Platonicâ opinio.* Gale *ad* Jamblich. More to the ſame purpoſe may be ſeen in *Fabricius* de Ver. Rel. Chriſt. c. 8. p. 315.

§ Thoſe *Pagans*, who were not atheiſts or ſceptics, ſeem generally to have been polytheiſts, that is, to have acknowledged one ſupreme and many inferior Gods; and to this claſs might perhaps be added moſt of the ditheiſts.

The ancient *Chineſe* are to be excepted, if we may give credit to *Louis Le Comte*, who in his relation of *China* ſays, that for the ſpace of near two thouſand years they preſerved the knowledge of the true God, and that they were not corrupted with idolatry till eight hundred years before Chriſt. Other Writers there are, who ſay that the old religion of *China* was indeed free [illegible]ſs idolatry, from the aſcribed much weakneſs and wickedneſs, and the worſhip of images and of dead men ; but that it appointed the worſhip of Dæmons, or inferior deities, who were to be adored beſides the ſupreme God. See *Fabric.* Luc. Evang. cap. 39. and *Bayle* Dict. ZOROASTRE, p. 2930. not.

Concerning the ancient *Perſians*, ſee *Hyde* Rel. Vet. Perſ. and *Fabricius*, Bibliogr. Antiq. p. 30, 31, and *Cudworth.*

The *Arabians* before *Mohammed* are ſaid to have acknowledged only one God ; but beſides him they worſhipped inferior Deities, Angels, Saints, *&c.* as mediators and interceſſors. See *Prideaux* Life of Mahom. and *Sale*'s Coran. *Prelim. Diſc.* p. 14. &c.

Cudworth obſerves, that *from the words of* Onatus *the* Pythagorean *in* Stobæus, *it plainly appears that in his time there were ſome who acknowledged one only God, denying all thoſe other Gods then commonly worſhipped. And indeed* Anaxagoras *ſeems to have been ſuch a one —— and ſome ſuch there were alſo amongſt the ancient* Ægyptians. —— *Moreover* Proclus *upon* Plato's Timæus *tells us, that there has been always leſs doubt and controverſy in the world concerning the one God, than concerning the many Gods.* Intell. Syſt. p. 233.

Anaxagoras held matter to be ſelf-exiſtent ; and *Gerard Voſſius* was miſtaken in thinking that this philoſopher believed the world to have been created, becauſe Νȣ͂ν *eſſe dixit principium mundi.* Theſ. Theol. Diſp. 1. p. 5. Νȣ͂ς, according to *Anaxagoras*, was only ἀρχὴ κινήσεως, the firſt mover, the cauſe of motion, and the former of all things.

Lucian deſcribing and deriding the various opinions of the philoſophers concerning the Gods and the world, ſpeaks of ſome perſons who maintained the unity of God. His words are and worſhipped them in a way n[illegible]

are remarkable: καὶ οἱ μὲν τοὺς ἄλλους ἅπαντα[illegible] θεοὺς ἀπε[illegible]άσαντες, ἑνὶ μόνῳ τὴν τῶν ὅλων ἀρχὴν ἀπένεμο[illegible]· ὥστε [illegible]εμα καὶ ἄχθεσθαί με, τοσαύτην ἀπορίαν θεῶν ἀ[illegible]οντα[illegible] οἱ δ᾽ ἔμπαλιν ἐπιδαψιλευόμενοι, πολλούς τε αὐτὶ[illegible] ἀπέφαινον, καὶ διελόμενοι, τὸν μέν τινα πρῶτον θεὸν ἐπεκάλουν, τοῖς δὲ τὰ δεύτερα, καὶ τρίτα ἔνεμον τῆς θεότητος. *Icaromen.*

Now if we conſider how hard it is to produce *Pagan* philoſophers, who taught the unity of God in ſo very expreſs a manner as is here repreſented by *Lucian*, we ſhall be inclined to think, that he had other perſons in view. Some, ſays he, make a ſad ſcarcity of Gods, expelling them all but one, and giving him the whole power and management; others are more bountiful, and divide the divinity into a firſt, a ſecond, and a third God. I think the words will bear this ſenſe; and, if ſo, *Lucian* might perhaps intend to ſcoff at the *Jews* and the *Chriſtians.*

The more refined kind of polytheiſm ſeems to have been the doctrine of one God and Father of all, who governed the world and adminiſter'd human affairs by the interpoſition and offices of beings inferior to himſelf and ſuperior to us, in a looſer ſenſe call'd Gods, who were of a middle nature between God and men, who preſided over this lower world, and who, as mediators, conveyed bleſſings from God to us, and offered up our adorations and thankſgivings to him. Notions like theſe had been adopted by ſome *Jews*, and by ſome of the firſt *Gentile* converts to Chriſtianity. St. *Paul* therefore exhorts the *Coloſſians* to place their faith and truſt, not in Angels, but in Chriſt, as in him by whom alone we have acceſs to the Father, [illegible]i. [illegible]8. where ſee the Commentators, and *Whitby*, p. 466. [illegible]ol. II. and on *Hebr*. i. 10.

---

* See *Juſtin M.* Apol. II. p. [illegible]d Dr. *Thirlby*'s notes, and *Grotius* de Satisfact. c. 10.

ſuitable to their ſuppoſed nature.* They worſhipped God in his works, in all things, and deified the ſeveral parts of nature, they worſhipped him under emblems, ſymbols, ſenſible repreſentations and images. They deified dead, and ſometimes living perſons, the former often out of injudicious gratitude, the latter uſually out of ſordid flattery. Amongſt the lower ſort ſuperſtition prevailed, amongſt the better, uncertainty† and doubt. And thus not making a proper uſe of their reaſon, they were ignorant, or not ſufficiently perſuaded of thoſe religious truths upon the knowledge and aſſurance of which our happineſs even in this life in a great meaſure depends; for if we take away the firm belief of a merciful creator and preſerver of the world, whoſe providence extends itſelf over all, and whoſe goodneſs protects and will reward thoſe who ſerve him and truſt in him, a man can enjoy no rational peace of mind, no true and well-grounded and laſting ſatisfaction. He cannot ſupport himſelf under the troubles inſeparable from life. Scarce can he rejoice even in the days of proſperity, which, he knows, muſt be of no long continuance.

---

* Many of them worſhipped brutes, *&c.* The *Ægyptians* are ſaid to have adored almoſt every thing, even *crepitum ventris.* *Apion,* (ſays *Joſephus*) who was an *Ægyptian,* ſhould not have ridiculed us for worſhipping the head of an aſs, though it had been true, ſince *aſinus non ſit deterior* furonibus *et hircis* —— *qui ſunt apud eos dii.* Contr. *Apion.* ii. So the old and barbarous Latin verſion; for here the Greek is loſt. The Commentators have not told us what animal this *furo* is. Perhaps the Interpreter meant a kind of *weeſel* or *ferret,* call'd in French, *furet,* in Calepin, *furunculus,* in Greek ἰκτὶς. But I believe that the animal mentioned by *Joſephus* was ἰχνεύμων, the *ichneumon,* the *Ægyptian* rat, who did his countrymen great ſervice, and was worſhipped by them, and reſembles the ἰκτὶς very much.

Μορφῇ δ' ἰχνεύταο κινωπέτου, οἷον ἀμυδρῆς
ἴκτιδος. *Nicander.* Theriac.

† Ibant obſcuri ſola ſub nocte per umbram.
Quale per incertam lunam ſub luce maligna
Eſt iter in ſilvis; ubi cælum condidit umbra
Jupiter, et rebus nox abſtulit atra colorem.
Virgil.

If it were true that there is no God, and we could be certain of it, it would be a truth which a rational being could not forbear to mourn all the days of his life. Man would then be expoſed, friendleſs and fatherleſs, to every kind of evil, under the dominion of blind Chance or unrelenting Neceſſity; nor could he be ſure that death would put an end to him and to his ſufferings, and that he ſhould not be drawn by a fatal Chain of things from this bad ſtate to a worſe. But all that we ſee without us, and all that paſſes within us, tells us in the ſilent language of nature, that there is an Author and Governor of the univerſe.

The Goſpel gives us a juſt and amiable deſcription of him. It teaches us that there is a God in whom we may confide, and whom, if we love virtue, we ſhall certainly love; to whom we may * addreſs our ſelves for the relief of our wants, and the pardon of our offences. It teaches us that God is not ſuch a Being as ſome of the *Gentiles* eſteemed him to be, not a being offended eaſily and without cauſe, and pacified by frivolous ceremonies, not a being enſlaved to neceſſity and fate, not a being who takes no notice of the world, and cares not whether men be virtuous or wicked, nor one who regards only great things, and cannot or will not inſpect all; but ſuch a being in every reſpect as a good man would wiſh him to be, and infinitely more perfect than the wiſeſt man can conceive him to be.

---

* The duty of man is three-fold; to God, to his fellow-creatures, to himſelf. The *Gentiles* had juſter notions of the duty of man to mankind and to himſelf, than they had concerning his duty to God. *Cicero*, I think, paſſes over this important part of morality in his *Books* of *Offices*, only juſt touching upon it, II. 3. *deos placatos pietas efficiet et ſanctitas.*

The Goſpel teaches us to be ſenſible of our wants and imperfections, and dependence upon God, and thereby * greatly ſurpaſſes *Pagan* philoſophy in enforcing † humility.

The

---

* See the Commentators on *Horace*, Epiſt. I. xviii. 111.

Sed ſatis eſt orare Jovem, quæ ponit et aufert:
Det vitam, det opes: æquum mî animum ipſe parabo.

Better is the following obſervation of *Cicero: Multos—et noſtra civitas et Græcia tulit ſingulares viros; quorum neminem, niſi juvante Deo, talem fuiſſe credendum eſt.—Nemo igitur vir magnus ſine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit.* De Nat. Deor. II. 66. And of *Maximus Tyrius*, who ſuppoſes that virtuous minds have ξυναγωνιστὴν θεὸν ϗ συλλήπτορα, *Diſſ.* xxii. and of *Seneca*, who ſays, *Bonus vir ſine Deo nemo eſt. An poteſt aliquis ſupra fortunam, niſi ab illo adjutus, exſurgere? ille dat conſilia magnifica et erecta. In unoquoque virorum bonorum, Quis Deus incertum eſt, habitat Deus.* Epiſt. XLI.

† The word *humilitas* is uſed by *Latin* writers in a bad ſenſe; but that this virtue was not quite unknown to them,

and

The Goſpel has taught us more than we

---

and to other *Gentiles*, may be proved thus: They acknowledged that pride or ſelf-conceit was a vice; they muſt therefore have perceived that there was a virtue contrary to it, and that it conſiſted in thinking ſoberly of our ſelves, and as we ought to think, and in acting ſuitably to ſuch thoughts, and as they ſometimes uſe μέγα φρονεῖν, ὑψηλὰ φρονεῖν, in a bad ſenſe, they muſt have allowed it to be commendable μέτρια καὶ ἀνθρώποις ἴσα φρονεῖν. They had alſo a name for this virtue: the *Romans* called it *modeſtia*, *moderatio*. *Barrow* ſays in one of his Diſcourſes, that the word *candor* anſwers nearly to *humility*. If he had thought at that time of *modeſtia*, he would have preferr'd it to *candor*. The word *demiſſus* is alſo found in *Latin* authors to denote a good diſpoſition; it anſwers to ταπεινὸς, and it means *humble*, *modeſt*, *meek*. Plato *de Leg*. IV. p. 715, 6. recommends humility towards God: ὁ μὲν δὴ Θεὸς, ἀρχήν τε καὶ τελευτὴν, καὶ μέσα τῶν ὄντων ἁπάντων ἔχων, ἐυθεῖαν περαίνει κατὰ φύσιν περιπορευόμενος. τῷ δ' ἀεὶ ξυνέπεται δίκη τῶν ἀπολειπομένων τοῦ θείου νόμου τιμωρός· ἧς ὁ μὲν ἐυδαιμονήσειν μέλλων, ἐχόμενος, ξυνέπεται ταπεινὸς [καὶ] κεκοσμημένος. ὁ δέ τις ἐξαρθεὶς ὑπὸ μεγαλαυχίας —— *Deus omnium rerum et principium et medium et finem in ſe habens, rectam viam peragit, explicans vim ſuam atque potentiam per hanc univerſi naturam, perque omnes illius partes circumquaque permanans. Hunc ſequitur juſtitia, eorum qui a divinâ lege deficiunt ultrix atque vindex, cui quidem juſtitiæ is* modeſto *et compoſito animo adhæret qui felix eſt futurus, ejuſque ductum et auſpicium conſtanter perſequitur. Qui autem ſuperbiâ elatus eſt* —— It is certain that ταπεινὸς has a good ſenſe here. See alſo *Origen* contr. *Celſ.* VI. p. 285. where this paſſage is cited; and *Clemens Alex.* Strom. II. xxii. p. 499. and the notes.

could elſe have diſcovered * concerning our ſtate hereafter.

As they are in an error who ſay that humility was abſolutely unknown to the *Pagans*; ſo thoſe learned men (and amongſt them *Huet.* Aln. Quæſt. 111. 8.) ſeem no leſs miſtaken, who will needs have it that this virtue is very frequently mentioned by the philoſophers. When you expect proofs of their aſſertion, they give you paſſages which recommend patience under injuries and calamities, a contempt of honours and power, of glory and popular applauſe, of cenſure and reproach; and at the head of the humble and meek they place the ragged regiment of the *Cynics*, many of whom were not leſs proud than poor.

Stoic humility is very well deſcribed by *Epictetus* XLV. Σημεῖα προκόπτοντος· οὐδένα ψέγει, οὐδένα ἐπαινεῖ, οὐδένα μέμφεται, οὐδενὶ ἐγκαλεῖ, οὐδὲν περὶ ἑαυτοῦ λέγει, ὡς ὄντος τινὸς, ἢ εἰδότος τι. —— κἄν τις αὐτὸν ἐπαινῇ, καταγελᾷ τοῦ ἐπαινοῦντος αὐτὸς παρ' ἑαυτῷ· κἂν ψέγῃ, οὐκ ἀπολογεῖται. —— ἂν ἠλίθιος, ἢ ἀμαθὴς δοκῇ, οὐ πεφρόντικεν. The ſigns of a proficient are theſe. He blames no one, he praiſes no one, he complains of no one, he accuſes no one, he ſays nothing of himſelf as of being ſome body or knowing ſomething. —— If any one praiſes him, he laughs at the praiſer within himſelf; if any one blames him, he makes no defenſe. —— If he be thought a fool, or an ignorant, he cares not.

---

* See *Whitby* on *Tim.* II. i. 10, and *Le Clerc* Proleg. Hiſt. Eccl. Sect. I. and II. *Varro* commemorare Deos cœpit, —— oſtendens in omnibus, quod ſit cujuſque munus, et propter quid cuique debeat ſupplicari. In quâ univerſâ diligentiâ, nullos demonſtravit vel denominavit Deos, a quibus vita æterna poſcenda ſit, *Auguſt.* de Civ. Dei. VI. 9.

It is true that reaſon furniſhes us with very probable arguments for the ſoul's immortality, and that many in all ages have believed it; nevertheleſs it is true alſo that the Goſpel has given us a clearer knowledge of our future condition.

For, (1.) the beſt arguments which reaſon ſuggeſts for the immortality of the ſoul are founded upon right notions of God and of morality; but before the Goſpel was revealed, the common people amongſt the *Gentiles* had low and imperfect notions of theſe important truths, and conſequently they were not perſuaded upon good grounds of their future exiſtence.

(2.) Though the belief of a ſtate after this was much received amongſt men, yet was it entertained by the vulgar rather as an ancient and long-eſtabliſhed opinion, than as a truth founded upon juſt reaſoning. Their anceſtors had believed a life to come, and they retained the notions which had been delivered down to them by tradition; but they could not trace this tradition up to its riſe, nor fix it upon an authority which might be truſted.

(3.) They who argued juſtly enough to conclude from the nature of God and of man, that it was reaſonable to believe the immortality of the ſoul, and to hope that a future ſtate of happineſs ſhould be the reward of a well-ſpent life, yet could not hence fairly draw any concluſions to their own full ſatisfaction; for they muſt have been ſenſible that they had not lived up to the laws of nature and the dictates of their own reaſon, and that they had offended the author of their being in many inſtances. It is true, they might have recourſe to repentance and amendment, but how far this would avail they could not certainly know. What could they hope more than to be removed after death into ſome other world, ſome other ſtate perhaps not much better than this?

(4.) Many * who believed the immortality of ſouls, believed alſo a continual and ſucceſſive removal of ſouls from one body to another, and no fixed ſtate of permanent hap-

---

* See *Grotius* on *Epheſ.* xi. 12.

pineſs. After death they were to dwell in ſome other body, and to continue thus changing their abodes, as they ſuppoſed that they had already done in ages paſt. And as in this life they had no memory of their former condition, ſo the memory of their preſent ſtate was to be loſt in the next. Thus their remembrance at * leaſt, which ſeems to be no ſmall part of one's ſelf, was to periſh by death.

(5.) Some, who in words acknowledged the immortality of the ſoul, ſeem in reality to have taken it away, by imagining that the ſoul was a part of the Soul of the world, of the Deity, and that † upon its ſeparation from the body it was reunited to it.

(6.) Some endeavoured to prove the ſoul's immortality by arguments which

---

* That *conſciouſneſs* is requiſite in *perſonal identity*, was the opinion of *Lucretius* III. 859, and of *Tertullian* De Roſurr. Carnis. —— *Neque mentem, neque memoriam, neque conſcientiam hominis hodierni credibile eſt aboleri, &c* —— *Si non meminerim me eſſe qui merui, quomodo gloriam Deo dicam?* —— &c.

Juſtin Martyr, or the old man who inſtructs him, ſays much the ſame, *Dial.* p. 147.

† See *Virgil* Georg. IV. 221.

proved too much, which ſhewed, if they ſhewed any thing, that the ſoul was from eternity; whence diſagreeable conſequences ſeem to flow.

(7.) Some ſuppoſed that the ſoul ſhould outlive the body, and receive a reward of virtue, but they thought that it was material and ſubject to diſſolution, and that a time muſt come when it ſhould periſh.

(8.) Many had ſo far debaſed their underſtanding as to perſuade themſelves that death was a diſſolution of the whole man, and that there was nothing to * hope or fear beyond this life.

Some we find entertaining † faint hopes mixed with ‡ many doubts, others fancying

ing

---

* ——— *mortem* cuncta mortalium mala diſſolvere; ultra neque curæ, neque gaudio locum eſſe. *Cæſar* apud *Salluſt.* B. C. 50. ubi vide *Waſſe.*

† Hence thoſe common forms of ſpeaking; *Si tamen e nobis aliquid reſtat*; *Si quid habet ſenſus umbra*; &c.

‡ *Seneca* on this ſubject is *ἀλλοπρόσαλλος*, wavering and inconſtant in his ſentiments. What *Homer* ſays of one of his heroes, might be applied to him:

> Τυδείδην δ' οὐκ ἂν γνοίης, ποτέροισι μετείη,
> Ἠὲ μετὰ Τρώεσσιν ὁμιλέοι, ἦ μετ' Ἀχαιοῖς.
>
> Il. E. 85.

Juvabat

ing that they ſhould be removed from one body to another, and be perpetual wanderers,

Juvabat de æternitate animorum quærere, imo mehercule credere. Credebam enim facilè opinionibus magnorum virorum, rem gratiſſimam promittentium magis quam probantium. Epiſt. cii. p. 503.

He ſays indeed, *Dies iſte, quem tanquam extremum reformidas, æterni natalis eſt.* Epiſt. cii. and elſewhere, *Animus æternitatis ſuæ memor, in omne, quod fuit, futurumque eſt, omnibus ſæculis vadit.* And, *Animus ſacer et æternus eſt.* Conſol. ad Helv. II. And, *Ipſe quidem æternus, meliorisque nunc ſtatus eſt*, &c. Ad Marc. 24.

But moſt of theſe paſſages are taken from his *Conſolations*, where it behoved him to ſpeak magnificently of the future ſtate of the ſoul, that he might aſſuage the grief of thoſe whom he exhorted to bear patiently the death or the abſence of their deareſt friends. In other places he talks in another manner.

Beſides, the word *æternus* in *Seneca* often means *diuturnus.* Conſol. ad Marc. *Nos quoque felices animæ et æterna ſortitæ, cum Deo viſum erit iſta moliri, labentibus cunctis, et ipſi parva ruinæ ingentis acceſſio, in antiqua elementa vertemur.* Nat. Quæſt. VII. *Non exiſtimo Cometen ſubitaneum ignem, ſed inter æterna opera naturæ.* Nat. Quæſt. II. 10. he calls the ſtars *æternos ignes*, And again *Nat. Quæſt.* VII. 23. See alſo ch. 25 and 37. And in *Thyeſtes* 835.

Non æternæ facis exortu
Dux aſtrorum ſecula ducens
Dabit æſtatis brumæque notas.——
Ibit in unum congeſta ſinum
Turba Deorum.

rers, others looking upon the grave * as upon their eternal habitation, and ſadly † complaining that the ſun and ſtars could ſet and riſe again, but that man when his day was ſet, muſt lie down in darkneſs and ſleep a perpetual ſleep.

2, The

Whence it appears, that *Seneca* calls *eternal* whatſoever he thought would laſt *uſque ad* ἐκπύρωσιν, till the Stoic conflagration, and would not periſh before the end of the world.

This is no very uncommon uſe of the word *æternus*, which has alſo the comparative *æternior*. See *Fabor's Theſaurus.*

On the contrary, *longævus* ſometimes ſignifies *immortal*, as *Servius* thinks, on *Virgil* Æn. VI. 764. and the *Scholiaſt* interprets μακραίων, ἀθάνατος in *Sophocles* Antig. 999.

* It is call'd DOMUS ÆTERNA in many Inſcriptions. *Gruter*, p. DCCLX. 5. DCCXC. 5. DCCCCIII. 6. DCCCCXIII. 6. &c.

† Soles occidere et redire poſſunt:
Nobis, quum ſemel occidit brevis lux,
Nox eſt perpetua una dormienda.

Catullus V.

Αἲ αἲ, ταὶ μαλάχαι μὲν ἐπὰν κατὰ κᾶπον ὄλωνται,
Ἢ τὰ χλωρὰ σέλινα, τό τ' εὐθαλὲς οὖλον ἄνηθον,
Ὕστερον αὖ ζώοντι, καὶ εἰς ἔτος ἄλλο φύοντι·
Ἄμμες δ' οἱ μεγάλοι καὶ καρτεροὶ ἢ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες,
Ὁππότε πρῶτα θάνωμες, ἀνακοοὶ ἐν χθονὶ κοίλᾳ
Εὕδομες εὖ μάλα μακρὸν ἀτέρμονα νήγρετον ὕπνον.

Alaſs! the tender herbs, and flow'ry tribes,
Though cruſh'd by Winter's unrelenting hand,
Revive and riſe when vernal Zephyrs call.

But

2. The Goſpel is truth, as it is the accompliſhment of the prophecies of future favours made under the Law. Chriſt was the prince of peace, the light of the *Gentiles*, the deliverer of the captives, the preacher of glad tidings, the founder of an everlaſting kingdom in a more exalted ſenſe than was commonly imagined by the *Jews* before his coming.

3. Laſtly. In the Law was contained an image and repreſentation of good things to come: in the Goſpel thoſe good things

---

But we, the brave, the mighty and the wiſe,
Bloom, flouriſh, fade, and fall,——and then ſucceds
A long long, ſilent, dark, 'oblivious ſleep;
A ſleep, which no propitious Pow'r diſpells,
Nor changing ſeaſons, nor revolving years.
Moſchus Epitaph. Bion.

In *Seneca*'s *Troades*, the Chorus ſays, 271.

Verum eſt? an timidos fabula decipit
Umbras corporibus vivere conditis? *&c.*
Poſt mortem nihil eſt, ipſaque mors nihil, *&c.*

Where the Poet, to introduce this faſhionable *Epicurean* doctrine, makes his Chorus ſpeak inconſiſtently and out of character; inconſiſtently, as may be ſeen *verſ.* 158.

Felix Priamus,——— nunc Elyſii
Nemoris tutis errat in umbris, *&c.*

and out of character, becauſe in the heroic ages, in the time of the *Trojan* war, the exiſtence of the ſoul after death was generally believed, according to *Homer*.

are brought to light. The Goſpel then is truth in oppoſition to the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation, as it is the ſubſtance and reality of all thoſe things which are figured by the Law; or as they were mere ſhadows compared to that ſolid and ſubſtantial truth which Chriſt has diſcovered to us.

FINIS.

REMARKS

ON

ECCLESIASTICAL

Διὰ δυσφημίας ϗ εὐφημίας.

Printed for C. DAVIS in *Holbourn*,
R. MANBY and H. SHUTE COX on *Ludgate-hill*,
and J. WHISTON in *Fleet-ſtreet*.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
RICHARD
Earl of Burlington,
Truſtee for the LECTURE
APPOINTED BY
The Hon. Robert Boyle Eſq.
Theſe REMARKS
Are Inſcribed by
His LORDSHIP's

Moſt obliged humble Servant,

JOHN JORTIN.

PREFACE.

WHAT is here offered to the Public is not a regular Treatiſe, but only a collection of detached Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory and ancient Writers, in which the order of time is neither ſtrictly obſerved, nor greatly neglected, and no anxious accuracy is beſtowed upon the dates of years. This is a neceſſary premonition to the Reader, who elſe would ſeek what he will not find.

Yet was it deſigned, ſlight and imperfect as it is, for the ſervice of *Truth*, by one who would be glad to attend and grace *her* triumphs; as her ſoldier, if he has had the honour to ſerve ſucceſsfully under her banner; or as a captive tied to her chariot-wheels, if he has, though undeſignedly, committed any offence againſt her.

Greater undertakings on theſe ſubjects are a taſk fit for thoſe who are bleſſed with conveniencies, ſpirits, and abilities, and a taſk ſufficient to exerciſe all their talents; for Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory is a ſort of enchanted Land, where it is hard to diſtinguiſh Truth from falſe Appearances, and a Maze which requires more than Ariadne's Clue.

Whilſt exalted Geniuſes diſcern with a kind of intuitive knowledge, they who have leſs penetration may be permitted, now and then, where Reaſon and Religion are not injured by it, to pauſe and doubt. Not that doubting is deſireable and pleaſant; but it is rather better than affirming ſtrongly upon ſlender proofs, or taking opinions upon truſt.

And yet there are inſtances, in Eccleſiaſtical Antiquities, of ſpurious Authors, forged Records, and frivolous Reports, where heſitation at this time of day would be improper, and where a man is not to remain for ever in ſuſpenſe, and to hear what every Patron has to ſay, who ſtarts up, and pleads the exploded cauſe of his ragged Clients.

The intention of this work is to produce ſuch evidence as may ſupport and confirm the truth of Chriſtianity, and ſhew that the Providence of God has appeared in its eſtabliſhment and in its preſervation; to avoid peremptory deciſions on ſome lately controverted queſtions, and ſeek out a way between the extremes; not to pronounce thoſe things falſe which may perhaps be true, nor thoſe things certain which are only probable, nor thoſe things probable which are ambiguous; and to try the experiment whether by this method a Reader may not be gently led to grant all that is required of him, and rather more than leſs; to ſet before men ſome of the virtues, as well as failings, of the ancient Chriſtians, whence they may draw practical inferences; to excite in their hearts a love for Chriſtianity, that beſt gift of Heaven to mankind, and a reſpect, though not a ſuperſtitious veneration, for thoſe good men, who, if they could not diſpute for it altogether ſo well as the preſent generation, yet, which is more, could die for it; to reject thoſe trifles which perſons of greater zeal than diſcernment would obtrude upon the world as golden reliques of Primitive Chriſtianity; and to add ſeveral things of a miſcellaneous and philological kind, which will ſerve, at leaſt, to diverſify the ſubject. Such is the intention of the Work: may it attone for its defects!

There is ſome comfort ariſing from a candid obſervation of the younger Pliny; *Hiſtoria quoquo modo ſcripta delectat.* A homely collection of remarkable tranſactions and revolutions has ever ſomething to recommend it to favour: and if this be true of Hiſtory, it is likewiſe true of thoughts and obſervations on Hiſtory, if they be not quite impertinent. They who repreſent it as a perfect loſs of time to peruſe ſuch authors as the *Hiſtoriæ Auguſtæ Scriptores* (though they are illuſtrated by excellent Commentators) and the *Byzantine Writers*, have a taſte too polite and faſtidious; ſince, where better Hiſtorians are not to be had, thoſe of an inferior claſs muſt ſupply their place, and become neceſſary and valuable on many accounts. A French writer is on our ſide, who ſays, *Tout livre eſt bon*, *Every book is good:* for thus he tranſlates the Latin title of a Treatiſe of Philo Judæus, *Omnis bonus liber eſt*, *Every good man is a free man.* It was well for him that he did not live within the reach of the Inquiſition, which might have taken this as a reflection on the *Index Expurgatorius.*

The Author would willingly eſcape the diſlike of *ſome* of thoſe perſons with whom perhaps he will be found not entirely to agree. He and they are engaged in the ſame common cauſe, and he hopes that, for the ſake of many remarks contained in this work, they will excuſe the reſt; as on his ſide, a diverſity of ſentiments, in ſome points, leſſens not the regard and value which he has for them, and which they ſo juſtly deſerve. In one reſpect he pretends to be extremely like Joſeph Mede. *I have a conceit*, ſays that excellent perſon, *that ſome opinions are in ſome ſort fatal to ſome men, and therefore I can with much patience endure a man to be contrary-minded, and have no inclination to contend with him. --- There is more goes to perſuaſion than reaſons and demonſtrations, and that is not in my power. --- There are few men living who are leſs troubled to ſee others differ from them in opinion than I am; whether it be a virtue or a vice, I know not.*

One of the nobleſt uſes which can be made of Chriſtian Antiquities would be to learn wiſdom, and union, and moderation, from the faults, indiſcretions, and follies, and from the prudence, charity, and piety of our predeceſſors; to obſerve carefully what was good, and what was blameable in remoter ages, and thence to improve ourſelves, as we are a Chriſtian nation, by removing the blemiſhes and defects, from which perhaps we are not free, and by adopting every thing commendable which we may have neglected.

A Chriſtian ſociety, formed upon ſuch a plan, would not altogether anſwer the fair and bright idea which the Imagination repreſents, becauſe Perfection dwells not here below, and ſome bad materials muſt of neceſſity enter into the ſtructure; but it would be more than a faint copy and image of that Church, which the beloved Diſciple had the pleaſure to ſee *coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her huſband, who had no need of the ſun, neither of the moon to ſhine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb was the light thereof.* Rev. xxi.

For this excellent end and purpoſe the divine Providence ſeems to have preſerved Eccleſiaſtical Records, and has commanded ed devouring Time to reſpect them, that Poſterity might receive inſtruction from thoſe venerable and ſilent Monitors, and not want examples to ſhun and to follow.

Chriſtianity, reduced to its principles, is more plain and ſimple than is commonly imagined, and is calculated for general utility.

When the firſt teachers of the Goſpel, the Apoſtles of Jeſus, died, their authority, in a great meaſure, died with them, and devolved not upon their diſciples --- but it ſtill lives in their writings.

Chriſtianity, though ſo much of it ever ſubſiſted as to diſtinguiſh it advantageouſly from Paganiſm, Judaiſm, Mohammediſm, Deiſm, varied conſiderably, and adopted ſeveral diſagreeing Non-eſſentials, according to the times and the people who entertained it.

A clear and unpolluted Fountain, fed by ſecret chanels with the dew of heaven, when it grows a large river, and takes a long and winding courſe, receives a tincture from the various ſoils through which it paſſes.

When Chriſtianity became a bulky ſyſtem, one may trace in it the genius of the loquacious and ever-wrangling Greeks; of the enthuſiaſtic Africans, whoſe imagination was ſublimed by the heat of the ſun; of the ſuperſtitious Ægyptians, whoſe fertile ſoil and warm climate produced Monks and Hermits ſwarming like animals ſprung from the impregnated mud of the Nile; and of the ambitious and political Romans, who were reſolved to rule over the world in one ſhape or other. To this we may add the Jewiſh zeal for trifles, ariſing from a contracted illiberal mind; the learned ſubtilty of the Gentile philoſophers; and the pomp and ceremony of Paganiſm.

As ſoon as Chriſtian ſocieties began, debates began, and as ſoon as Chriſtianity was by law eſtabliſhed, debates grew more violent. It is not in the wit or in the power of man, or rather, it is an impoſſibility

poſſibility to prevent diverſity of opinions; ſince this is the unavoidable reſult of human imperfection and human liberty, and is not to be removed, unleſs we had more light, or leſs agency.

It is related of a grave Roman Magiſtrate, that, when he came to Greece as Proconſul, he aſſembled together the Philoſophers at Athens, the head-quarters of wit and logic, and told them that he was much concerned at their diſſenſions, and adviſed them to agree at laſt in their opinions, and offered them his authority and aſſiſtance to reunite and reconcile them; upon which they all agreed, in laughing at him for his pains. *Cicero* De Leg. i. 20.

Councils after Councils convened to ſettle the differences amongſt Chriſtians; and ſometimes they met ſo frequently, that they might be called *Quarter-ſeſſions* as well as *Councils*. But Gregory Nazianzen, a man of learning, a Chriſtian, a Biſhop, and a Father of the Church, has told us, that, for his part, he choſe to avoid all ſuch aſſemblies, becauſe he never ſaw any that had good ſucceſs, and that did not rather increaſe than leſſen diſſenſions and quarrels. *Epiſt.* lv. and in many other places, where he repeats the ſame complaints in verſe and in proſe.

The Chriſtians had never agreed concerning the time of keeping Eaſter; but when Victor was Biſhop of Rome, about A.D. 196, the conteſt grew warm, and Victor excommunicated, or attempted to excommunicate the Aſiatic Churches which would not comply with his Infallibility, for which Irenæus reproved him as he well deſerved. Thus the domineering ſpirit began to exert itſelf betimes. The Council of Nice afterwards ſettled the affair, and then the few Quartodecimans who ſtood out were called heretics, according to the cuſtom of calling every thing hereſy that offends the majority. But they muſt have been a ſtubborn and refractory ſet of people, to wrangle on about ſuch a trifle, and not to yield to the far greater number in a thing of no conſequence to faith or morals. They ſhould have agreed to break the egg at the ſame end with their neighbours. If the upper ſide has been ſometimes imperious and over-ruling, the lower has been as perverſe and unperſuaſible.

When the Fathers aſſembled at Epheſus, and, headed by Cyril of Alexandria, had decreed that Neſtorius ſhould be depoſed, and that the Virgin-Mother of our Saviour ſhould be called *Mother of God*, the people of Epheſus, who had been in miſerable fears and anxieties, with tranſports of joy embraced the knees, and kiſſed the hands of the Biſhops; a people, as we may ſuppoſe, warm, and ſprightly, and very much in earneſt. Their Pagan Anceſtors had ſignalized themſelves by their zeal for Diana.

If General Councils have dogmatically decreed ſtrange things, Little, National, Proteſtant Synods have often acted in a manner full as arbitrary. One that was held in France, A. D. 1612. offended at ſomething that *Piſcator* had taught concerning *Juſtification*, compelled all who ſhould go into Orders to take this oath: *I receive and approve all that is contained in the Confeſſion of faith of the Reformed Churches of this nation, and promiſe to perſevere therein to my life's end, and never to believe or teach any thing not conformable to it: and becauſe ſome have conteſted about the ſenſe of the eighteenth article, which is concerning Juſtification, I declare and proteſt before God, that I underſtand it according to the ſenſe received in our Churches, approved by National Synods, and conformable to the word of God, which is, that our Saviour was obedient to the Moral and Ceremonial Law, not only for our good, but in our ſtead, that all the obedience which he paid to the Law is imputed to us, and that our Juſtification conſiſts, not only in the remiſſion of ſins, but alſo in the imputation of his active righteouſneſs. --- And I promiſe never to depart from the doctrine received in our Churches, and to ſubmit to the Regulations of National Synods on this ſubject.* Synodes Nationaux, etc. par Aymon. Theſe men would no more have parted with an inch of their Theological Syſtem, than the Muſcovites once would with an inch of their beards.

Here follows another Decree, made in France A. D. 1620.

I ſwear and promiſe before God and this holy Aſſembly, that I receive, approve, and embrace all the doctrine taught and decided by the National Synod of Dort --- I ſwear and promiſe that I will perſevere in it all my life long, and defend it with all my power, and never depart from it in my Sermons, College-Lectures, Writings, or Converſation or in any other manner, public, or private. I declare alſo and proteſt that I reject and condemn the doctrine of the Arminians, becauſe etc. --- So help me God, as I ſwear all this without equivocation or mental reſervation.

They ſhould have thus prefaced the Ordinance; *It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than theſe neceſſary things which follow, etc.*

To compel any one to ſwear that he will never alter his opinions about Controverſial Divinity; is a grievous impoſition. It might have made ſome unſtable men go over to Popery out of reſentment, and ſay, *If I muſt ſurrender body, ſoul, ſenſe, and underſtanding, the Church of Rome ſhall have them, and not you.*

Thus,

Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra:

whilſt Chriſtianity bluſhes and grieves that ſhe can ſay ſo little in behalf of her children.

I paſs over the Synod of Dort, in which the prevailing Party oppreſſed, as they often do, the Wiſe and the Learned, and entailed an irrational and uncharitable Syſtem on their Poſterity.

It is ſaid that Pope Innocent, the tenth, (I think) when the Janſenian controverſy was ſo warmly agitated, told his learned Librarian Lucas Holſtenius, that he was very uneaſy about it, and unwilling to decide it, becauſe it was a point which he underſtood not, and had never ſtudied. Holſtenius replied, that it ſeemed not neceſſary for his Holineſs, at that time of life, to begin to ſtudy it, and much leſs to decide it, ſince it was an intricate ſubject, which had divided not only the Chriſtian world, but the greateſt philoſophers of antiquity; that if the contending parties were left to themſelves, after they had reaſoned, and railed, and wrangled, and declaimed, and preached, and written againſt one another, and eaſed themſelves that way, they would at laſt ſit down and be quiet for very wearineſs, or for want of hearers and readers: which advice ſeemed not at all amiſs to the Pope, and was favourably received, but not followed.

Poſtellus was a Scholar and a Fanatic, two things that are ſeldom found together. Latin and Greek helped to damage his head, and Hebrew quite overſet him. He gave into Cabbaliſtic interpretations of the Old Teſtament, and believed in the revelations of ſome Sibyl, ſome daughter of

Eſdras, who propheſied in his days, and was one of thoſe who want to let in new light upon the Church, whilſt they want more to have the light ſhut out, and the flaws and creviſes patched and ſtopped in the ὑπερῷον, in the upper chamber at home. The poor man was accuſed of hereſy; upon which, he entered boldly into the Lion's Den, ſurrendered himſelf a priſoner to the Inquiſitors at Venice, offering to take his trial, and to demonſtrate his innocence; and thus gave an additional proof of his diſorder, whilſt, with the adventurous Lover in the Fable,

Tænarias etiam fauces, alta oſtia Ditis,
Et caligantem nigra formidine lucum
Ingreſſus, Maneſque adiit, Regemque tremendum,
Neſciaque humanis precibus manſueſcere corda.

Poſtellus, like Orpheus, found favour in the ſight of the *Infernal Powers*: They behaved themſelves, who would believe it! as Philoſophers and Chriſtians upon

the

the occaſion, and did him juſtice; for after a fair hearing, they paſſed ſentence on him, declaring that he was not a *Heretic*, but only *Mad*; *Poſtellum non eſſe hæreticum, ſed tantum amentem.* Lettres de Simon, i. 23. If the Inquiſitors would act thus, it would be better for their priſoners in this world, and for themſelves in the next. It will then be found a poor excuſe for their cruelty, that it helped to fill the Church with Nominal Catholics, and to keep up an unity of exoteric faith in the bond of ignorance, fear, and hypocriſy.

Men will compell others, not to think with them, for that is impoſſible; but to ſay they do; upon which they obtain full leave, not to think or reaſon at all, and this is called *Unity*; which is ſomewhat like the behaviour of the Romans, as it is deſcribed by a brave country-man of ours in Tacitus,—*Ubi* ſolitudinem *faciunt*, pacem *appellant*.

Diſputing enflames firey zeal, and men beſtow blows upon their antagoniſts, eſpecially

ſpecially when arguments fall ſhort. *Invalidum Urſis caput, vis maxima in brachiis et in lumbis*, ſays Solinus. If their hands are tied, they beſtow a plentiful effuſion of curſes, and denounce divine judgments; but if they are at full liberty, they beſtow both: and then Cruelty is called Charity, Charity to the ſoul, and this ſame Charity, as it is of a fruitful and diffuſive nature, produces Anathemas, Informations, Calumnies, Baniſhments, Impriſonments, Confiſcations, Inquiſitions, and ſo forth.

Tillemont, ſpeaking of the ſcandalous perſecution in the reign of Conſtantius, when the *Arians* oppreſſed the *Conſubſtantialiſts*, and warmed with his ſubject, breaks out into theſe reflections, — *Conviction and perſuaſion cannot be brought about by the imperious menaces of princes; nor is there any room left for the exerciſe of reaſon, when a refuſal to ſubmit brings on baniſhment and death.— Such doctrines proceed from the invention of men, not from the Spirit of God, who forces and compells* *no one against his will.* His obſervations are juſt; you can no more ſubdue the Underſtanding with blows, than beat down a caſtle with ſyllogiſms. A lucid ray ſhot through the ſoul of this ſuperſtitious, though elſe valuable Writer, as a flaſh of lightning in a dark night. There is indeed between the human Underſtanding and Truth a natural and eternal alliance, which is ſuſpended and diſordered by Ignorance, Paſſion, Bigotry, Prejudice and Selfiſhneſs, but can never be totally broken. When a man ſuffers, and ſees his friends ſuffer for conſcience ſake, he perceives the beauty of the ſacred Rule, *Whatſoever ye would that others ſhould do unto you, do ye even ſo unto them*: but when the Orthodox perſecute the Heterodox, this pious Author winks hard, and can ſee no great harm in it. No more could Auguſtin, when, upon ſecond thoughts, but not the wiſeſt, he contended for the doctrine of perſecution, in ſome Letters, which Bayle has taken to pieces very handſomely in his *Philoſophical Commentary*;

tary; happy, if he had always ſo exercised his abilities, and had left his *Manicheans* to ſhift for themſelves! Sarah, ſays Auguſtin, and Hagar are types of the Catholic Church and of the Heretics. When Hagar offends her miſtreſs, this is downright rebellion: when Sarah beats Hagar, this is due correction. So is it with the Spiritual and the Ungodly; they are always at variance, always buffeting and bruiſing each other, but the baſtinadoes of the Righteous are ſanctified by the good intention, and by the ſalutary effects.

Socrates the hiſtorian, like an honeſt man, cenſures Theodoſius, an orthodox Biſhop, for perſecuting the Macedonians, vii. 3. upon which Valeſius thus delivers his opinion: *Celebris quæſtio eſt, etc.* *It is a celebrated and much controverted queſtion, whether it be lawful for Catholics, and particularly for Biſhops, to perſecute heretics. I think it is neceſſary to have recourſe to a* DISTINCTION. *It is certainly unlawful to vex them, as Theodoſius* *did, for the ſake of extorting money; and alſo to proſecute them as criminals, and to thirſt after their blood, as Idatius and ſome other Biſhops of Spain acted towards the Priſcillianiſts. But it is and ever was permitted to the Catholics to implore the aid of Princes and Magiſtrates againſt Heretics, that they may be reſtrained, and kept in order, and that they may not inſolently exalt themſelves above the Catholics, or inſult and deride the Catholic Religion. Auguſtin indeed confeſſes that he had formerly been of opinion, that Heretics ſhould not be haraſſed by Catholics, but rather allured by all kind of gentle methods. Yet afterwards he changed his opinion, having learned by experience that the Laws made by the Emperors againſt Heretics had proved the happy occaſion of their converſion; and he obſerves that the converted Donatiſts had acknowledged that they never ſhould have returned to the Church, but have lived and died in their errors, if they had not been, in a manner, incited and attracted by the puniſhments and mulcts of the Imperial Laws. This paſſage of Auguſtin, which* *is very elegant, is in the* xlviii*th Epiſtle to Vincentius, to which may be added what he has ſaid in the* xxiiid *ch. of the firſt book againſt Gaudentius.*

In ſome places which Valeſius knew, and in ſome places which he knew not, the *Odium Theologicum*, like a poiſonous Tree, has reared its head and ſpread its arms, and the neighbouring plants, inſtead of receiving ſhelter and protection, have ſickened and withered beneath its baleful influence; yet was it a friendly covering to weeds and nettles, and the fox lodged ſafely at its root, and birds of ill omen ſcreamed in its branches.

The groundleſs ſurmiſes of a Booby, or of a Bigot, have hurt many a man of ſenſe, and qualified him to be regiſter'd in an Appendix to *Pierius de Infelicitate Literatorum.* Where arbitrary power has prevailed, nothing has proved more profitable than either obſequious dulneſs, or a political palſy in the head, nodding and aſſenting to all, *Omnia omnibus annuens;*

as Catullus ſays of old age.

Opinions ſtart up, and flouriſh, and fall into diſgrace, and ſeem to die; but like Alpheus and Arethuſa, they only diſappear for a time, and riſe into light, and into favour again.

What men call Hereſy, is often a *local* and a *ſecular* crime; for what is Hereſy in one century, and in one country, is ſound doctrine in another; and in ſome diſputes, as in the Neſtorian and the Pelagian controverſies, to mention none beſides, it is a nice thing to ſettle the boundaries between Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy, and the only way to be ſafe is to have recourſe to *implicit faith*, and to imitate the prudent Monk, who when Satan would have drawn him into hereſy, by aſking him what he believed of a certain point, anſwered, *Id credo quod credit Eccleſia.* But, *Quid credit Eccleſia?* ſaid Satan, *Id quod ego credo*, replied the other;

ther: and Neſtorius, if he would have ſlept in his own bed, ſhould have ſaid, *Id credo quod credit Sanctiſſimus Cyrillus.* Neſtorius perhaps ſuffered no more than he deſerved, becauſe he had been a perſecutor himſelf; but ſuch violent proceedings about ſuch points, in different times and places, have inclined many perſons to ſuſpect that in thoſe aſſemblies, ſome were talkative, quarrelſome, diſingenuous, and overbearing, whilſt others were paſſive Dolts, and *pedarii Senatores.* Every age has continued to produce wranglers of this kind, who now have the reſt which they would not give other people; and whoſe works follow them, and are at reſt alſo.

Theodoſius, the firſt, made ſevere laws againſt Heretics, about A. D. 380, and required of all his ſubjects that they ſhould follow *the faith of Pope Damaſus, and of Peter of Alexandria*; for which and ſuch like holy and wholeſome ordinances, to be found in the Theodoſian Code, he is extolled by Tillemont and many others, as a Man of God. The beſt thing that can be ſaid for him is, that he was not, on theſe occaſions, as bad as his word, but threatened more than he performed. As to Damaſus, whatſoever his faith was, it had been better for him to have lived and died a Preſbyter, and one cannot ſay of him that he *fought a good fight*, when he fought for his Biſhopric. His Braves ſlew many of the oppoſite party, and great was the fury of the religious Ruffians on both ſides, in this holy war. Pious times, and much to be honoured, or envied!

What is to be done then with one who is, or who is accounted or whiſpered to be erroneous? Why, *Diſtinguendum eſt*: you muſt not ſhed his blood, nor enrich yourſelf with his ſpoils; but you may contrive other ways to bring him to a right mind, or to beggary: Ways, which reſemble the method of Italian Aſſaſſins, to beat a man with ſatchells of ſand; no blood is ſhed, and no bones are broken, but the patient dies by the operation.

A Gentleman and a Scholar, as Valeſius was, ſhould have nothing to do with ſuch *diſtinctions:* he ought rather to *diſtinguiſh* himſelf from the vulgar by a larger mind, by deteſting perſecution in every ſhape, were it only for this reaſon, that it is the bane of letters; by accounting all the Learned and Ingenious, whereſoever diſperſed, or howſoever diſtreſſed, as brethren, and by loving and ſerving them, unleſs they be *rude* and *inſolent*, *vitious* and *immoral.* Would Valeſius have had ſuch countrymen of his as Joſeph Scaliger, Iſaac Caſaubon, Salmaſius, Bochart, Blondel, Daillé, ſent to inhabit the Baſtille, or the Gallies? would he have had them directed, corrected, and inſulted by a King's Confeſſor, and by perſons who knew nothing beſides their Breviary, if peradventure they knew that? This is not ſaid to inſinuate that the Gallican Church had not in his time, and in all times, many excellent men: nothing can be farther from the Author's thoughts; but the fomenters of oppreſſion and perſecution have been uſually either void of letters, or learned Dunces at the beſt; and have accounted it an inſufferable impudence in any man to be wiſer, and more knowing than themſelves. How could Valeſius even name *Auguſtin*, who, ingenious as he certainly was, and reſpectable as he may be on other accounts, yet by the weak things which zeal, not ill-nature, urged him to ſay on this ſubject, tarniſhed in ſome degree his own reputation, and eſpouſed a Cauſe full of abſurdities which all the wit of man cannot defend, and of ſpots which all the water of the Ocean cannot waſh off?

In this World, in this great Infirmary, among other diſtempers with which poor mortals are afflicted, is an intemperate zeal, or a ſpirit of party, which, when it ariſes to a certain pitch, is not to be reſtrained by the gentle bands of Reaſon: they are broken aſunder, as a thread touched with fire. The Imagination then plays her part, and raiſes an ugly Phantom, and the man ſpends his rage upon it, and ſometimes by miſtake ſtrikes at his Friend,

----- *et ſit pugil, et Medicum urget.*

Whilſt the inconveniencies are no greater than this, we ſhould patiently bear with the defects and diſorders of ſuch men, as with the frowardneſs of thoſe who are in pain, and, as Seneca ſays, *more optimorum parentum, qui maledictis ſuorum infantium arrident*; like tender parents, who ſmile at the little perverſities of their children; for there are *old* as well as *young* children, and perhaps more indulgence is due to the former than to the latter, ſince they cannot be ſpoiled by it, being paſt curing.

And here the civil Magiſtrate is of excellent uſe, to keep the peace among his fractious ſubjects, or at leaſt to keep them from doing one another a bodily miſchief. Forbear to draw your ſword upon your adverſary, ſays Minerva to Achilles; abuſe him as much and as long as you will:

'Αλλ' ἄγε λῆγ' ἔριδος, μηδὲ ξίφος ἕλκεο χειρί·
'Αλλ' ἤτοι ἔπεσιν μὲν ὀνείδισον, ὡς ἔσεταί περ.

But worſe than Fanatical Fervour is the ſedate Spirit of religious tyranny, ariſing from the luſt of dominion, from ſordid ſelf-intereſt, and from atheiſtical politics, taking its meaſures, and purſuing its ends deliberately, void of all regard to truth, and of every tender ſentiment of pity and humanity.

Thus Chriſtianity degenerated, and Things went on from bad to worſe, from folly to corruption, from weakneſs to wickedneſs; and then the Reformation made conſiderable amendments.

THE Chriſtian World is now divided into the Reformed and Unreformed, or rather, into thoſe who are not, and thoſe who are members of the Church of Rome. The latter, as they deal leaſt in reaſon, are the moſt diſpoſed to uſe the illuminating arguments above-mentioned, which ſerve as a *ſuccedaneum* in the place of reaſon. They would willingly force upon us a mode of Chriſtianity which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. Our religious eſtabliſhment is far better and highly valuable, and we ſhould be ungrateful if we did not eſteem it; but the more ſimple and unexceptionable a religion is, the dearer will it be to thoſe who underſtand it, and know what it is to enjoy it. In ſuch a religion Charity would be a gainer, and Faith would be no loſer, and it would be an eaſier taſk to ſatisfy doubters, to bring over infidels, and to re-unite believers. Before the Jews ſhall be converted, and the Gentiles flow into the Church, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that in the Chriſtian world there will be more harmony, more mutual compliance and forbearance, than at preſent is to be found.

As the oppoſers of the Goſpel have frequently had recourſe to arguments *ad hominem*, and have taken advantage from modern ſyſtems, and from the writings of Divines of this or that perſuaſion; ſo the defenders of Revelation have often found themſelves under a neceſſity of reducing things to the venerable Chriſtianity of the New Teſtament, and of adventuring no farther; and of declining the reſt as not eſſential to the cauſe, and to the controverſy.

The removal even of ſmall defects, and improvement from good to better ſhould always be the object of every man's warm wiſhes, and modeſt and peaceable endeavours. Modeſt and peaceable they ought certainly to be; for there is a reverence due to the Public, to Civil Society, to Rulers and Magiſtrates, and to the Majority; and decency and prudence are neither *marks* of the *Beaſt*, nor that *worldly wiſdom* which ſtands condemned in the Goſpel. In all ſuch endeavours great care and diſcretion are requiſite. Difficulties of various ſorts preſent themſelves, and difficulties not to be ſlighted, ſome of which ſhall be paſſed over in ſilence, becauſe they might poſſibly rather tend to irritate than to appeaſe, and give an offence which ſhould be induſtriouſly avoided. There is a fear of conſequences, ariſing in cautious and diffident minds, a fear of loſing what is valuable by ſeeking what is deſireable; there is a wide-ſpread indifference towards every thing of a ſerious kind, and it is ſadly encreaſed by that thoughtleſs diſſipation, and thoſe expenſive follies which are ſo prevalent; there is alſo a ſettled diſlike of the Goſpel among too many, who are ſo ignorant, and ſo prejudiced, as to account Chriſtianity itſelf to be of no uſe and importance.

Theſe conſiderations may incline melancholy perſons to imagine, that it is vain to expect amendments of a more refined nature, which ſeem to depend on a favourable concurrence of circumſtances ſeldom united, and that we have not a foundation which can bear the ſuperſtructure.

It is much to be wiſhed, that more effectual methods could be contrived to ſuppreſs vice, and to aſſiſt the willing, and to compel the unwilling to earn their bread honeſtly in the days of their youth and ſtrength, and thereby to ſecure the peace of civil ſociety, and to ſave from ruin ſo many poor creatures, of whom it is hard to decide, whether they be more wicked, or more miſerable, and whoſe crimes it would be far better to prevent, than to puniſh. If we could do any thing to remove, or to diminiſh theſe dreadful evils, moral and natural, the love of God and of Man would be our reward. But theſe are things, which perhaps are reſerved for another generation:

---- *manet noſtros felix ea cura nepotes.*

LET us in the mean time be thankful for what we have; for our religion and liberties; for a diſpoſition which may be called national, to acts of charity public or private, and for that portion of learning, and that ſkill in liberal arts and ſciences, which we poſſeſs, ſufficient to ſecure us from the contempt of our Neighbours, though not to give us any claim to precedency. What we poſſeſs of erudition, muſt in a great meaſure be aſcribed to the prevailing force of education, emulation, and cuſtom; for ſo it is, the love of letters, begun at *School*, and continued at the *Univerſity*, will uſually accompany a man through all the changing ſcenes of this life, improving his pleaſures, and ſoothing his ſorrows. Happy is it, that the pious and judicious liberality of our Anceſtors founded and endowed *thoſe two noble Seminaries*, which have been our beſt ſecurity againſt Ignorance, Superſtition, and Infidelity.

ESTOTE PERPETUÆ!

An agreeable remembrance of former days preſents itſelf,

> ——*nec me meminiſſe pigebit Alumnæ,*
> *Dum memor ipſe mei, dum ſpiritus hos regit*
> *artus.*

But let us alſo do juſtice to the Theological merits and uſeful labours of perſons of another denomination in this country, of whom *Qui tales ſunt, utinam eſſent noſtri.*

POLITE LEARNING, or *Humanity* helps to open and enlarge the mind, and to give it a generous and liberal way of thinking, not what is vulgarly termed *Free-thinking*, and belongs to vulgar Underſtandings. *Learning* has a lovely child, called *Moderation*, and *Moderation* is not afraid or aſhamed to ſhew her face in the Theological World; the number of her friends is encreaſed, and, whilſt our civil Conſtitution ſubſiſts, they are in no danger of being ſewed up in a bag with a Monkey, a Viper, a Wit, and a Free-thinker, and flung into the next river. That *Liberty of Propheſying* may prevail, and that *profane Licentiouſneſs* may be reſtrained, are wiſhes which ſhould always be joined together.

AND now, if men will ſay I perſuade to Indifferency, I muſt bear it as well as I can. I am not yet without remedy, as they are; for patience will help me, and reaſon cannot cure them. The words are borrowed from a pious, ingenious, learned, charitable, and ſweet-tempered Biſhop, who, with a noble candour and generous openneſs, pleads the cauſe of *Liberty of propheſying*, and who never was cenſured for it by any man worth the mentioning, though probably he was reviled by thoſe who called *Tillotſon* an *Atheiſt*. If theſe two excellent *Prelates*, and *Eraſmus* and *Chillingworth*, and *John Hales*, and *Locke*, and *Epi-*

Epiſcopius, and *Grotius*, and many who ſhall not be be named, had been contemporaries, and had met together FREELY to determine the important queſtion, *What makes a man a Chriſtian*, and *what profeſſion of faith ſhould be deemed ſufficient*, they would probably have agreed, notwithſtanding the diverſity of opinions which they might all have had on ſome Theological points. There have been others indeed, who on ſuch an occaſion would have given us an ample catalogue of *Neceſſaries*, the inference from which would have been, that it muſt needs be a very learned, and a very ſubtle, and a very ingenious thing to be a good Chriſtian; for ſome of theſe *Neceſſaries* are of ſo refined a nature, that the Underſtanding can hardly lay hold of them, or the Memory retain them:

Ter fruſtra comprenſa, manus effugit imago,
Par levibus ventis, volucrique ſimillima ſomno.

Some of the beſt defenders of Chriſtianity, down from Origen, no Saint, it ſeems, but worth a hundred and fifty Saints who might be mentioned, have been unkindly uſed and traduced by *injudicious* Chriſtians, for a harder epithet ſhall not be given to them. *Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?* Even civil war has ceaſed, when the common Enemy has been at the door, and mad Factions have joined to repel him, and to crown the deſerving with laurel garlands; but Chriſtians, when beſieged by powerful and formidable Infidels, have found leiſure and ſtomach to contend, whether the light which ſhone about Chriſt at his transfiguration was created or uncreated.

WHAT has been here ſuggeſted was with a view, not to dictate, no not even to adviſe, but only to moderate a prejudice which lies deep in the heart of an Engliſhman and a Churchman, that as his own vales, hills, rivers, and cities ſurpaſs in beauty and convenience any thing that the world affords; ſo his own religious conſtitution is free even from all appearance of defect, and ſhadow of imperfection. This may be called, *amare Focos, et Lares*; the firſt we eaſily excuſe, as an amiable weakneſs in the Engliſhman; let us ſhew the ſame favour to the other in the Churchman: but a little more candour, and a little leſs partiality would do us no harm. The Author aims at nothing beyond this, and therefore ENTERS INTO NO PARTICULARS. If the general intimation be proper, from whom can it come more properly than from one whoſe name or addreſs can give no ſanction to it, and raiſe no prejudices in its behalf; ſo that it muſt rely upon its own reaſonableneſs, and ſtand deſtitute of all other recommendation?

As to particulars, his opinion would never be aſked in ſuch caſes, and, if it were aſked, he would perhaps, like Simonides, deſire a day to conſider, and then another, not thro' an affectation of humility, nor, if he may be credited, thro' hope of pleaſing, or fear of diſpleaſing, but through a real diffidence, and a conſciouſneſs of the difference between diſcerning what may be ſpeculatively right, and judging what is practicable. An application to Moral and Theological Studies will lead a perſon to ſome ſkill in the firſt, if he has a mind open to conviction; but the latter requires a genius and a knowledge of a different ſort.

Beſides all this, the middle courſe between too *low* and too *high*, between the *Serpent* and the *Altar*, is ſomewhat hard to keep:

Neu te dexterior tortum declinet in Anguem,
Neve ſiniſterior preſſam rota ducat ad Aram.
Ovid. Met. ii. 138.

It may therefore be more adviſeable for him to examine *himſelf* in ſerious ſilence, and to conſider what paſſes *within*, and in his own little circle, where the circumference almoſt touches the centre;

Ὅ,ττι οἷ ἐν μεγάροισι κακόν τ' ἀγαθόν τε τέτυκται.

which ſingle line, according to the wiſe Socrates, contains a complete ſyſtem of philoſophy.

IF he deſires that others would receive with Chriſtian candour theſe ſuggeſtions, which, whatſoever they be, proceed from a good intention, and are not the language of ſelf-intereſt, he deſires no more than he is very willing to return. But be that as it will, he is not at all diſpoſed to contend about them.

Errare poteſt: litigioſus eſſe, non vult.

Such contentions beget, or keep up enmity; and he had rather glide through the world, like a ſhadow, obſcurely and quietly, and meet with *few* cenſurers; for to have *none*, is a bleſſing which never was deſigned for a writer on Eccleſiaſtical ſubjects.

For this, and for other good reaſons, Authors ſhould avoid, as much as they can, replies and rejoinders, the uſual conſequences of which are, loſs of time, and loſs of temper. Happy is he who is engaged in controverſy with his own paſſions, and comes off ſuperior; who makes it his endeavour that his follies and weakneſſes may die before him, and who daily meditates on mortality and immortality.

LET us hear a wiſe man, who thus ſpeaks to himſelf, and to us: *May my laſt hours find me occupied in amending and improving my heart! that I may be able to ſay to God, Have I violated thy commands? have I ever accuſed thee, and complained of thy government? I have been ſick and infirm, becauſe it was thy appointment; and ſo have others, but I willingly. I have been poor, according to thy good pleaſure, but contented. I have had no dignities; thou haſt withheld them, and I have not thought them even worthy of a wiſh. Didſt thou ſee me ſad and dejected on theſe accounts? Did I not appear before thee with a ſerene countenance, and cheerfully complying with thy ſacred orders? Deal with me, and diſpoſe of me as thou wilt; thy will is mine: and if any one ſhall ſay that thou haſt been unkind to me, I will defend and maintain thy cauſe againſt him. Wilt thou that I depart hence? I go; and I return thee my* *ſincereſt thanks that thou haſt vouchſafed to call me hither to this great aſſembly and entertainment, and haſt permitted me to contemplate thy works, to admire and adore thy providence, and to comprehend the wiſdom of thy conduct. May death ſeize me writing and meditating ſuch things!*

It is needleſs to ſay whence theſe reflections are taken; the Owner is ſo well known: but they can never be too often cited, and if the Stoical ſelf-ſufficiency which breathes in ſome parts of them were corrected by Chriſtian humility, they would be to many of us a *proper Leſſon* for the day, and remind us of the reſignation that is due to an all-wiſe and all-gracious Providence.

CONTENTS.

Page

Circumſtances of the Roman Empire favourable to the beginnings and increaſe of Chriſtianity 1 to 8

Whether Tiberius propoſed to deify Chriſt 2

Conjecture on a paſſage in Juvenal 9--- 13

Caſe of the Dæmoniacs who are mentioned in the New Teſtament 14--- 19

Of the Dæmoniacs after the Apoſtolic age 242---244

The gift of tongues 15--- 20

Page
The predictions of Chriſt concerning the deſtruction of Jeruſalem accompliſhed. Shewed to have been extant before the event 20--- 89
The writings of Joſephus 35--- 41
Books of the New Teſtament authentic; and proved to be ſo by internal characters 41--- 50
Cited, or alluded to, by Apoſtolical Fathers 52--- 61
By ancient Heretics 68--- 70
333---335
Shorter Epiſtles of Ignatius preferred to the larger 61--- 67
355---361
Conjecture on a paſſage in Joſephus 79
Euſebius and Herodotus explained 88--- 90
Remarks on prophecy in general and on its uſes 90---164
The Dæmon of Socrates, etc. 94, 95
Atheiſts ſuperſtitious 103
Divination in the Pagan world conſidered 107---164

	Page
The hiſtory of Tobit	112
A prophetic dream of Socrates	117
Modern accounts of prophecies and prophetic dreams	118---121 377---387
Pagan oracles	121---126 143---164 189---191
Euſebius, his account of them	143---145
Idolatry whether worſe than Atheiſm: and Bayle's ſentiments conſidered	127---141
Oracles ridiculed by Ariſtophanes and Lucian	146---149
Oracles at Hierapolis mentioned by Lucian De Dea Syria; *and ſome remarks on that book*	149---160
The opinions of Herodotus, and of Van Dale concerning oracles	161---164
The prophecies relating to our Saviour	164---228
Prophecies in the Old Teſtament which cannot be ſuppoſed to	

Page
have been forged after the event 173---179
Accommodations 181
Direct prophecies 182
Types 183---188
226
Prophecies of double ſenſes 188
Omens 192
The prediction of Moſes that a Prophet ſhould ariſe like unto him, and the reſemblance between Moſes and Chriſt examined 196---226
Conjecture on a Paſſage in Herodotus 212
The prohibition of eating blood 215
Bacchus and Hercules reſemble Moſes 223
The Apoſtolical Conſtitutions conſidered 228---278
Some remarks on the Compiler of them 233---236
Their account of the Chariſmata 230
Of Epiſcopal authority 223
Allude to Solomon's Song 236---242

What

Page
What they ſay of Dæmoniacs 242
Of baptiſm 244
Of adultery, etc. 247
The Helleniſtic language 248
The Phariſees, Sadducees and Eſſenes 259---273
A paſſage in Porphyry concerning the Eſſenes explained 269
And in Joſephus 271
Simon's fabulous combat with St Peter 255
A forged Sibylline oracle cited in the Conſtitutions 274
An emendation of a fault in it 277
The Apoſtolical Canons conſidered 278---283
The Sibylline oracles examined, and rejected as forgeries and impoſtures 283---328
Homer's prophecy concerning Æneas and his poſterity 286---289
Virgil's fourth Eclogue conſidered 294---299
Fabricius, his account of the Sibylline oracles 289

Orphic

Page
Orphic verſes, and fragments of Greek poets, etc. which are cited by the Fathers, examined and corrected 300---328
Euſebius not to be charged with defending the Sibylline Oracles 315
Juſtin Martyr not the forger of them 320
Sibylline Oracles which were made by Pagans 325---328
Barnabas. The antiquity and the dubious authority of the Epiſtle aſcribed to him 329---336
Some remarks on Clemens Romanus 336
On Hermas and Polycarp 338
The Recognitions of Clemens a wretched romance. A paſſage in them explained 336---342
The Epiſtle to Diognetus the work of an uncertain and inconſiderable writer 342---348
Tillemont. Obſervations on his ſentiments and writings 348---351

Page
Juſtin M. and Clemens Alex. had favourable opinions of the future condition of the virtuous Pagans 351---354
Clemens Alex. explained and corrected 354
Ignatius. Remarks on his Epiſtles and his martyrdom 355---372
A reading in one of his Epiſtles defended 356---361
Remarks on a Tax inſtituted by Auguſtus 372—376

REMARKS

ON

Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory.

IT has been often obſerved that Chriſtianity made its appearance in the moſt proper time, and under a favourable concurrence of circumſtances. Something has been ſaid on this head in my fourth *Diſc.* on the *Chriſtian Religion:* what is now offered to the Reader is partly a continuation of the ſame ſubject, and theſe *Remarks* are intended, in ſome meaſure, as a ſupplement to thoſe *Diſcourſes.*

Chriſtianity began to gain ground in Judæa and its neighbourhood in the reign of Tiberius, a very wicked prince, but who was ſo occupied with his luſts and with his cruelty towards conſiderable perſons whom he hated, envied, or feared, and was alſo naturally ſo ſlow and indolent, that either he heard little of this remote and riſing ſect, or thought it beneath his notice, and ſo did it no harm.

It is probable that Pilate, who had no enmity towards Chriſt, and accounted him a man unjuſtly accuſed, and an extraordinary perſon, might be moved by the wonderful circumſtances attending and following his death to hold him in veneration, and perhaps to think him a Hero, and the ſon of ſome Deity. It is poſſible that he might ſend a narrative, ſuch as he thought moſt convenient, of theſe tranſactions to Tiberius; but it is not at all likely [a] that Tiberius propoſed to the Senate that Chriſt ſhould be deified, and that the Senate rejected it, and that Tiberius continued favourably diſpoſed towards

---

[a] See *Le Clerc* Hiſt. Eccl. p. 324.

Chriſt, and that he threatened to puniſh thoſe who ſhould moleſt and accuſe the Chriſtians. This report reſts principally upon the authority of Tertullian, who was very capable of being deceived, and Euſebius had it from him, *Eccl. Hiſt.* ii. 2. The ancient Chriſtians might have been miſinformed in this, as in ſome other points. Tiberius was of an irreligious diſpoſition and a fataliſt, and little diſpoſed to encreaſe the number of the Gods and the burden of Atlas, [b] *Circa deos ac religiones negligentior: quippe addictus mathematicæ; perſuaſioniſque plenus cuncta fato agi.* He hated foreign ſuperſtitions, Ægyptian and Jewiſh rites, [c] *Externas cæremonias, Ægyptios Judaicoſque ritus compeſcuit.* He [d] and the Senate had expelled the Jews from Rome, and about the time of Chriſt's crucifixion he had deſtroyed an illuſtrious family, for this, amongſt other reaſons, that divine honours had been paid to one Theophanes an anceſtor of theirs: [e] *Datum erat crimini quod Theopha-*

---

[b] Sueton. Tiber. 69. [c] Sueton. Tiber. 36.

[d] Tacitus, Suetonius, Joſephus. [e] Tacitus Ann. vi. 18.

nem Mitylenæum proavum eorum Cn. Magnus inter intimos habuiſſet: quodque defuncto Theophani cæleſtes honores Græca adulatio tribuerat. Auguſtus commended Caius for not worſhipping at Jeruſalem: [f] *Caium nepotem, quod Judæam prætervehens, apud Hieroſolymam non ſupplicaſſet, collaudavit:* and Tiberius made it a rule, *omnia facta dictaque ejus vice legis obſervare*, as he ſays of himſelf in *Tacitus* Ann. IV. 37. Obſerve alſo that the Jews perſecuted the Apoſtles and ſlew Stephen, and that Saul made havock of the Church, entering into every houſe, and haling men and women, committed them to priſon, and that Pilate connived at all this violence, and was not afraid of the reſentment of Tiberius on that account.

The cuſtom which the Romans had to deify and adore their emperors, moſt of them after their deceaſe, and ſome of them during their lives, even though they were the vileſt of mankind, the apotheoſis of Antinous, Adrian's favourite, the contempt which many emperors, as Tiberius, and Caius, and [g] Nero ſhewed towards their Gods, the endeavour of [h] Heliogabalus to ſuppreſs the worſhip of the ancient deities, and to introduce a ridiculous God of his own, the ſtrange Ægyptian deities which had crept into Italy, and were there adored by ſome and deteſted by others, the liberty which [i] many learned perſons had taken with the popular religion, theſe things had a tendency to wean the Pagans by ſlow degrees from their attachment to idolatry, and to facilitate the worſhip of one God and Father of all, who by his Son, or his Word, reconciled to himſelf and inſtructed mankind, and by his Spirit aſſiſted virtuous minds in their progreſs to wiſdom and happineſs, as a religion more ſimple, and noble, and philoſophical, and reaſonable than Paganiſm.

---

[f] Sueton. Aug. 93.

---

[g] Religionum uſquequaque contemtor, præter unius Deæ Syriæ. Hanc mox ita ſprevit, ut urinà contaminaret. *Suet.* Ner. 56.

[h] Heliogabalum in Palatino monte juxta ædes imperatorias conſecravit, eique templum fecit, ſtudens et Matris typum, et Veſtæ ignem, et Palladium, et ancilia, et omnia Romanis veneranda in illud transferre templum, et id agens, ne quis Romæ deus niſi Heliogabalus coleretur. &c. *Lampridius* 3.

[i] It is related ſomewhere of Diogenes the Cynic, that, to ſhew his contempt of ſacrifices, he took a louſe, and crack'd it upon the altar of Diana.

The Senate, ſays Dio, ordered the temples of Iſis and Serapis to be pulled down, and afterwards would not ſuffer any to be erected *intra pomærium.* Τοὺς ναοὺς, οὓς ἰδίᾳ τινὲς ἐπεποίηντο, καθελεῖν τῇ Βούλῃ ἔδοξεν· οὐ γὰρ δὴ τοὺς θεοὺς ἐνόμισαν, καὶ ὅτε γε καὶ ἐξενίκησεν, ὥστε καὶ δημοσίᾳ αὐτοὺς σέβεσθαι, ἔξω τοῦ πωμηρίου σφᾶς ἱδρύσαντο. XL. p. 142.

A little after the civil war between Cæſar and Pompey, the *Haruſpices* ordered the temples of theſe deities to be demoliſhed. *Dio* XLII. p. 196.

How much the goddeſs Iſis and her ſacred rites were deſpiſed may be ſeen in Propertius ii. 24. Lucan VIII. 831. IX. 158. Juvenal VI. 489. 526. IX. 22. not to mention ſeveral others. The apotheoſis of the Roman Emperors is made the ſubject of the utmoſt contempt and ridicule by Seneca in his Αποκολοκυντωσις.

The Romans knew not much of Chriſtianity, and in a great meaſure overlooked ed it, till its profeſſors were ſo conſiderably increaſed, that they could not eaſily be deſtroyed.

Chriſtianity at firſt was more likely to proſper under bad than under good Emperors, if theſe were tenacious of their religious rites and ceremonies. The bad Emperors had uſually other crimes and other miſchief in view, and no leiſure to plague ſuch a little ſect, little when compared to Paganiſm.

And accordingly from the death of Chriſt to Veſpaſian, for about the ſpace of thirty ſeven years, the Romans did not much mind the progreſs of the Goſpel. They were ruled by weak, or frantic, and vitious Emperors, the Magiſtrates and Senators, and every worthy man of any note ſtood in continual fear for their own lives. Under Galba, Otho, and Vitellius the empire was a ſcene of confuſion, deſolation, and miſery.

Nero indeed deſtroyed ſeveral Chriſtians at Rome, but it was for a ſuppoſed crime of which all the world knew them to be innocent; ſo that this cruel treatment raiſed compaſſion, and rather did ſervice than harm to the Chriſtian cauſe, and the perſecution was ſoon over.

If Claudius and the Senate in his time had known the nature of the Goſpel in this point, that it was directly oppoſite to the national religion, and that, if it proſpered, Paganiſm muſt decline and come to nothing, and that every Chriſtian thought himſelf bound to ſpread his opinions by all arts and means which were not immoral, they would have endeavoured to ſuppreſs it effectually; but it lay ſcreened then under Judaiſm, and the Jews had leave to worſhip God in their own way.

The Chriſtians who ſuffered under Nero are called *malefici* by Suetonius c. 16. that is, ſorcerers, magicians. Probably the Pagans had heard of their miracles, and aſcribed them to magic arts, which yet was a kind of indirect acknowledgment of them.

Juvenal iii. 41.

Quid Romæ faciam? mentiri neſcio—motus
Aſtrorum ignoro: funus promittere patris
&c.

where the old Scholiaſt ſays: *motus aſtrorum:* Maleficus *non ſum.* But here I doubt it ſhould be, *Mathematicus non ſum,* which is a more literal interpretation.

Nemo mathematicus genium indemnatus habebit.—
Conſulit ictericæ lento de funere matris,
Ante tamen de te &c. VI. 562.

With the Reader's leave, I will ſtep out of my way to correct a paſſage in this Poet, XIII. 64.

Egregium ſanctumque virum ſi cerno, bimembri
Hoc monſtrum puero, vel mirandis *ſub aratro*
Piſcibus inventis, et fœtæ comparo mulæ,
Sollicitus, tanquam lapides effuderit imber,
Examenque apium longa conſederit uva
Culmine delubri, tanquam in mare fluxerit amnis
Gurgitibus miris, *et lactis vortice torrens.*

Henninius has given in the text *mirandis.* Lubin ſays we muſt read *mirántis,* not *miranti.* Gataker conjectures *liranti.* Theſe honeſt men were all diſpoſed to feed upon acorns, whilſt other copies had *miranti,* which was very well explained by Britannicus, *ſub aratro miranti, ut rei inanimæ dederit ſenſum. Miranti aratro* is juſt ſuch an expreſſion as *irato ſiſtro,* XIII. 93. *eſuriens ramus olivæ,* XIII. 99. &c. &c.

[°]I need not obſerve how flat and unmeaning and unpoetical is the expreſſion, *Gurgitibus miris,* and how ill it comes in after *miranti.* The Poet intended to ſpeak of a prodigy, of a river running bloody, which together with ſhowers of blood has been often mentioned amongſt prodigies. See *Cicero* De Divin. I. 43. The word which he uſed was ſomewhat uncommon, and therefore loſt, and ill ſupplied. He wrote, I believe,

Gurgitibus miniis, *et lactis vortice torrens.*

miniis, that is *ſanguineis, rubris inſtar minii.* The adjective *minius* or *mineus,* from *minium, red lead, vermilion,* is twice uſed by Apuleius, *Fulgentium roſarum minius color*, and, *Cervicula pſittaci circulo mineo.* Faber's Theſaurus. If there were no example extant of the adjective *minius,* that would not be a ſufficient reaſon to reject the emendation, ſince the Greek and Latin poets frequently turn ſubſtantives into adjectives. So Juvenal himſelf XI. 94. according to the beſt copies;

Qualis in Oceano fluctu *teſtudo nataret.*

113.

Litore *ab* Oceano *Gallis venientibus* ---

Catullus, LXIII. according to Scaliger's emendation,

Nimirum Oceano *ſe oſtendit Noctifer* imbre.

And hence Milton, I.

hugeſt that ſwim th' Ocean ſtream.

Minium in Greek is μίλτος, and the Sibylline Oracles ſpeak thus of a bloody ſhower;

Καὶ ψεκάδες πίπτωσιν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ, οἷά τε
μίλτος.

The old Scholiaſt ſays, *Gurgitibus miris*] *Aut lacteis, aut ſanguineis.* But you have nothing in Juvenal that anſwers to *ſanguineis*, unleſs you change *miris* into *miniis*, which is alſo a very ſlight alteration. The Poet might have ſo contrived it as to have uſed *ſanguis* or *cruor*, or their adjectives, but *Gurgitibus miniis* pleaſed him better, as it had a more ludicrous caſt, and he choſe rather to ſtain his river with red oker than with blood. It threw a contempt upon portents and prodigies, things which he was not much diſpoſed to believe. Lucian, or whoſoever he be who wrote the treatiſe *De Dea Syria*, ſays that the river Adonis was ſtained with blood every year, ὁ γὰρ ποταμὸς ἑκάστου ἔτεος αἱμάσσεται, καὶ τὴν χροιὴν ὀλέσας, ἐσπίπτει ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν, καὶ φοινείσσει τὸ πολλὸν τοῦ πελάγεος.— *Illud flumen ſingulis annis cruentatur, ſuoque amiſſo colore in mare effunditur, et magnam maris partem inficit.* 8. He adds that an inhabitant of Byblus explained the phænomenon thus: ὁ Ἄδωνις ὁ ποταμὸς, ὦ ξεῖνε, διὰ τοῦ Λιβάνου ἔρχεται· ὁ δὲ Λίβανος κάρτα ξανθόγεώς ἐστι· ἄνεμοι

ὦν

ὧν τρηχέες ἐκείνῃσι τῇσι ἡμέρῃσι ἱστάμενοι τὴν γῆν τῷ ποταμῷ ἐπιφέρουσι, ἐοῦσαν ἐς τὰ μάλιστα μιλτώδεα· ἡ δὲ γῆ μιν αἱμώδεα τίθησι. *Adonis flumen, o hoſpes, venit per Libanum. At Libanus multum rubicundæ terræ habet. Venti ergo vehementes, qui ſtatos illis diebus flatus habent, terram flumini inferunt* minio *vàlde ſimilem. Hæc illud terra reddit ſanguineum.*

This account has been ſince confirmed by Maundrel in his *Voyages.*

Sanguinem pluiſſe, ſays Cicero, *ſenatui nuntiatum eſt, Atratum etiam fluvium fluxiſſe ſanguine.— Sed et decoloratio quædam ex aliqua contagione terrena poteſt ſanguini ſimilis eſſe.* De Div. ii. 27.

Some may think that we ought to read *Gurgitibus miniis,* aut *lactis vortice torrens,* inſtead of *et.* But, unleſs the beſt Manuſcripts deceive us, *et* is often uſed in a disjunctive ſenſe, and implies much the ſame as *aut*; and likewiſe *que,* where *ve* might ſeem more proper. Of this I gave ſome examples in the *Miſcell. Obſerv.* Vol. ii. p. 255.

AMONGST the miracles recorded in the Acts of the Apoſtles is the caſting out of evil Spirits. In the New Teſtament, where any circumſtances are added concerning the Dæmoniacs, they are generally ſuch as ſhew that there was ſomething præternatural in the diſtemper; for theſe diſordered perſons agreed in one ſtory, and paid homage to Chriſt and to his Apoſtles, which is not to be expected from madmen, of whom ſome would have worſhipped, and others would have reviled Chriſt, according to the various humour and behaviour obſervable in ſuch perſons.

One reaſon for which the divine Providence ſhould ſuffer evil Spirits to exert their malignant powers ſo much at that time, might be to give a check to Sadduceiſm amongſt the Jews, and to Epicurean atheiſm amongſt the Gentiles, and to remove in ſome meaſure theſe two great impediments to the reception of the Goſpel.

THE firſt miracle after the aſcenſion of Chriſt, namely the gift of tongues, was of ſingular and extraordinary ſervice to Chriſtianity. It increaſed the number of believers at Jeruſalem, and engaged the admiration and favour of the people ſo much, that the enemies of Chriſt could not accompliſh their deſigns againſt the diſciples, and it ſerved to convey the Goſpel to diſtant regions.

It has been ſaid that the gift of tongues continued for a conſiderable time to be abſolutely neceſſary for the ſpreading of Chriſtianity: but it is to be obſerved that the Scriptures never ſay ſo. We may therefore judge for ourſelves how far it was needful.

Now at the time of Pentecoſt there was a great reſort of Jews and Proſelytes from various and remote countries. The gift of tongues conferred upon the diſciples ſerved to convince and convert many of theſe perſons, and theſe perſons ſerved to carry Chriſtianity with them to their ſeveral homes. Afterwards the Æthiopian eunuch, Cornelius the Roman Centurion, Sergius Paulus the Proconſul, Dionyſius the Areopagite, and many others were converted. By theſe perſons, and by the travels of ſome of the Apoſtles and of their diſciples, Chriſtianity was ſpread in the Roman empire and in the Eaſt; and then the Greek language, together with human induſtry in learning other tongues, might be ſufficient to convey the Goſpel as far and as ſoon as Providence intended.

Apollonius Tyaneus, as [k] Philoſtratus relates, pretended to underſtand all languages without having learned them. If Philoſtratus may be credited in this, it is probable that Apollonius, knowing that the Chriſtians claimed this gift, took the ſame honour to himſelf. He flouriſhed in the times of Nero and of Domitian, and it is to be ſuppoſed that he could ſpeak a little of ſeveral tongues, for he was a man of parts and a ſtrolling vagabond.

---

[k] Vit. Apoll. p. 25. ed. Par. or Euſeb. Contr. Hier. p. 517.

Philoſtratus alſo aſſures us, that, when the mother of Apollonius was in labour, the ſwans came to attend and aſſiſt her; for which he produces no voucher, ſays Euſebius in Hierocl. p. 517. Now Philoſtratus, or whoſoever was the author of this pretty ſtory, ſtole the thought from Callimachus:

Κύκνοι δὲ θεοῦ μέλποντες ἀοιδοὶ
Μηόνιον Πακτωλὸν ἐκυκλώσαντο λιπόντες
Ἑβδομάκις περὶ Δῆλον· ἐπήεισαν δὲ λοχείῃ
Μουσάων ὄρνιθες, ἀοιδότατοι πετεηνῶν.

Hymn. in Delum, 249. where theſe poetical birds perform the ſame office to Latona.

Clemens Alexandrinus cites Plato as ſaying that the Gods or Dæmons had the uſe of language, and that it appeared from the diſcourſes of Dæmoniacs, ſince in thoſe poſſeſſions, it was not the man himſelf, but the Dæmon in him who ſpake by the man's voice. Ὁ Πλάτων δὲ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς διάλεκτον ἀπονέμει τινά· μάλιστα μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀνειράτων τεκμαιρόμενος καὶ τῶν χρησμῶν· ἄλλως δὲ, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν δαιμονώντων, οἱ τὴν αὐτῶν οὐ φθέγγονται φωνὴν οὐδὲ διάλεκτον, ἀλλὰ τὴν τῶν ὑπεισιόντων δαιμόνων. Strom. 1. p. 405. Oxon. Edit. I may have overlooked it, but I never could find this place in Plato. There is ſomething a little like it in Porphyry, where Apollo ſays of himſelf,

Αὐλοῦ δ' ἐκ βροτέοιο φίλην ἐτεκνώσατο φωνήν.[a]

Jucundam expirat mortali e gutture vocem.

On which the Philoſopher obſerves, Πνεῦμα γὰρ τὸ κατιὸν, καὶ ἀπόῤῥοια ἐκ τῆς ἐπουρανίου δυνάμεως, εἰς ὀργανικὸν σῶμα καὶ ἔμψυχον εἰσελθοῦσα, βάσει χρωμένη τῇ ψυχῇ, διὰ τοῦ σώματος, ὡς ὀργάνου, φωνὴν ἀποδίδωσιν. *Spiritus enim e loco ſuperiore delapſus, illaque adeo particula, quæ cæleſti virtute in corpus ſuis inſtructum facultatibus animatumque defluxit, animum veluti baſim aliquam ſortita, vocem per corpus veluti per quoddam inſtrumentum edit.* Apud Euſeb. *Præp.'Ev.* v. 8. Theſe Δαιμονῶντες, of whom the Philoſophers ſpeak, were perſons inſpired, or ſuppoſed to be inſpired by Apollo, Cybele, or other Dæmons. In later times the ſpeaking of new languages has been reckoned one of the proofs of being poſſeſſed with a dæmon. See *Bayle's* Dict. *Grandier*, and *Michael Pſellus* de *Operat. Dæmonum*, and ſome inſtances collected by Cudworth, *Intell. Syſt.* p. 704, 5. That from Fernelius is mentioned by Le Clerc, in his extracts from Cudworth, *Bibl. Choiſ.* v. p. 100. He has made a ſmall miſtake when he ſays, *Un Melancholique que les Médecins avoient traité en vain, et qui ne ſavoit ni Grec, ni Latin, ſe mit a parler ces deux langues.* Fernelius only ſays that the young gentleman did not underſtand Greek.

---

[a] φίλην φωνὴν may be tranſlated *ſuam vocem*. ἐτεκνώσατο· forſ. ἐτεχνώσατο, vel, ἐτεχνήσατο, vel, τεχνήσατο.

To learn a foreign language ſo far as to underſtand it when we read or hear it, is a ſkill which is not to be acquired without much time and pains. To ſpeak it readily and pronounce it rightly, is ſtill more difficult: it is what many perſons can never accompliſh, though they have all the proper helps, as we may ſee every day; nor can any ſtudy and application acquire this habit, unleſs there be an opportunity of converſing frequently with thoſe whoſe tongue it is.

If the Apoſtles on the day of Pentecoſt had expreſſed themſelves improperly, or with a bad accent, as moſt people do, when they ſpeak a living language which is not natural to them, the hearers, who at that time were not converted to Chriſtianity, would have ſuſpected ſome fraud, would have taken notice of ſuch * faults, and cenſured them; which ſince they did not, it is to be ſuppoſed that they had nothing of that kind to object.

WITHIN forty years after the reſurrection of Chriſt came on the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, a moſt important event, upon which the credit and the fate of Chriſtianity depended. Chriſt had foretold it ſo expreſly, that, if he had failed, his religion could not have ſupported itſelf. But his predictions were exactly accompliſhed, and proved him to be a true prophet.

---

* As the Jews did to Peter, when they ſaid to him, *Thou art a Galilæan, and thy ſpeech bewrayeth thee.*

Chriſt fixed the time alſo, ſaying that the days were at hand, and would come before that generation ſhould paſs away, and whilſt the daughters of Jeruſalem, or their children, ſhould be living.

The completion of Chriſt's predictions has been fully ſhewed by many writers, particularly by Whitby. To him I refer the reader, on Matt. xxiv. and ſhall here inſert in the notes ſome * remarks on this

---

* Our Saviour foretelling the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, applies to the Jews in a prophetic ſenſe this proverbial ſaying, *Whereſoever the carcaſe is, there will the eagles be gathered together*, Mat. xxiv. 28.

The Jewiſh writers had this maxim among them, that wicked men while they live are to be reckoned amongſt the dead. See Druſius on Mat. iv. 4. and viii. 22. See alſo Luke xv. 32. Epheſ. ii. 1. Tim. i. v. 6. But wicked men are ſpoken of in Scripture under this figure with ſtill greater propriety, if for their crimes they were devoted to death, and condemned to it by a divine or human ſentence.

part of the ſubject, which Dr. Pearce the Biſhop of Bangor was ſo kind as to com-

Gen. xx. 3. By the word *carcaſe*, Chriſt means the Jewiſh nation, which was morally and judicially dead, and whoſe deſtruction was pronounced in the decrees of heaven.

In Euſebius E. H. iii. 23. τέθνηκε is explained by Θεῷ τέθνηκε· ἀπέβη γὰρ ϖονηρὸς ϗ ἐξώλης ϗ τὸ κεφάλαιον ληστής.

Νυνὶ δὲ δημαγωγεῖ ἐν τοῖς ἄνω νεκροῖς. Ariſtoph. Ran. Act. i. Sc. 7. in choro.

See L. Capell. and Grotius on Mat. viii. 22. who ſays, Νεκροὶ vocantur homines a vera diſciplina, quæ animi vita eſt, alieni. διὸ ϗ ἐν τῇ (ait Clemens Alex. Strom. v.) βαρβάρῳ φιλοσοφίᾳ νεκροὺς καλοῦσι τοὺς ἐκπεσόντας τῶν δογμάτων, ϗ καθυποτάξαντας τὸν νοῦν τοῖς ϖάθεσι ψυχικοῖς. Hauſit quoque hæc, ut alia, ab Orientis philoſophia Pythagoras, τὰς τῶν Ἰουδαίων δόξας μιμούμενος, ut de eo ſcribit Hermippus: ſiquidem ϗ ϖρὸς τοὺς Ἑβραίους ἀφίκετο, ut de eo ex Diogene ſcribit Malchus; unde mos ortus ut his qui cœtu Pythagoreorum eſſent ejecti, cenotaphia ſtrumunicate; obſerving only that Chriſt foretold,

erentur, quod Hipparcho cuidam factum legimus, &c.

Under the metaphor of *eagles* which fly ſwiftly and ſeize upon their prey violently, conquerors with their armies are frequently ſpoken of in Scripture. Jeremiah *Lament.* iv. 19. ſays, *Our perſecutors are ſwifter than eagles*; and Hoſea viii. 1. ſays of the king of Aſſyria, *He ſhall come as an eagle againſt the houſe of the Lord, becauſe they have tranſgreſſed his covenant.* Ezekiel xvii. 3. pronounces a parable under the ſame figure; *Thus ſaith the Lord, A great eagle, with great wings full of feathers, came unto Lebanon, and took the higheſt branch of the cedar*; which the prophet thus explains ver. 12. *Behold the king of Babylon is come to Jeruſalem, and hath taken the king thereof.*

Nor muſt it be forgotten, that when Moſes *Deut.* xxviii. 49, &c. threatens the Jews with the deſtruction of their nation, if they would not hearken unto the words of the Lord, the deſcription of the calamities, with which he

1. The total deſtruction of the city.
2. Of the temple.

threatens them, anſwers ſo exactly in the moſt material parts to the final deſtruction of that people by the Romans, that this ſeems to have been chiefly and principally in the intention of the prophet; and there the deſtroying army is ſpoken of under this very emblem of an eagle; *The Lord ſhall bring a nation againſt thee from far, from the end of the earth, as ſwift as the eagle flieth; a nation whoſe language thou ſhalt not underſtand.*

The ſenſe of the proverb then is this; whereſoever the wicked Jews are, there will the Roman eagles, the deſtroying armies, follow them; and whitherſoever they fly, ruin and deſolation will overtake them.

Chriſt had been foretelling to his diſciples the deſtruction of the Jewiſh nation, and the vengeance which he was to take upon them for their obſtinate refuſal of him and his doctrine. This he expreſſed by *the coming of the Son of man*; and he told them many particulars of what was to happen before and at that great day of viſitation. Among others he ac-

3. The

3. The coming of falſe Chriſts and falſe prophets, magicians and ſorcerers, leading the people to the deſarts.

quainted them that there would be ſome impoſtors who ſhould ſet up themſelves for the Chriſt or Meſſiah of the Jews: *Wherefore*, ſays he, *if they ſhall ſay unto you, Behold he is in the deſart, go not forth: behold he is in the ſecret chambers, believe it not.* i. e. none but falſe Chriſts will be found there. The true coming of Chriſt will be of another nature; *not with obſervation*, Luke xvii. 20. not with a diſplay of his perſon, but of his power in the vengeance which he is to take upon the Jews; not reſtrained to the deſert or the chambers, not confined to holes and corners, nor to any one part of Judæa, but extended through every province of it; *for as the lightning*, ſays he, *cometh out of the eaſt and ſhineth even unto the weſt, ſo ſhall alſo the coming of the ſon of man be*, i. e. as extenſive and univerſal over the land, as the lightning ſhines; the compariſon being brought in to ſhew not ſo much its ſwiftneſs, as its wide extent and compaſs: for *wherefoever the carcaſe* &c. In St. Luke

4. Famines.
5. Peſtilences.

when our Lord had been deſcribing this calamity which was to befall the Jews, his diſciples aſked him, *Where Lord?* where ſhall this happen? to which he replied, *Whereſoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.* If then his words contain any direct anſwer to the queſtion, they muſt be underſtood as pointing out the place and extent of the calamity.

This prophecy was pronounced by our Saviour near forty years, and recorded by St. Matthew near thirty years before the event was to take place. And, for the literal accompliſhment of it, we have the authority of Joſephus. He was a General on the ſide of the Jews in the beginning of that war, and a priſoner at large in the Roman army during the reſt of it: he was a party concerned in much of the calamity of his country-men, and an eye-witneſs to almoſt all of it. And beſides this it is to be conſidered, that if he ever had heard of this prophecy, which it is probable he had not, yet as he was a Jew by religion, and a Jewiſh Prieſt too, he is

6. Earthquakes.
7. Fearful ſights and great ſigns from heaven.

therefore a witneſs not to be ſuſpected of partiality in this caſe, and was every way qualified to give us an exact hiſtory of thoſe times; which he has accordingly done, by deſcribing very punctually all the particulars of that terrible deſtruction.

From his account it may be obſerved, that the Roman army entered into Judæa on the eaſt ſide of it, and carried on their conqueſts weſtward, as if not only the extenſiveneſs of the ruin, but the very route, which the army would take, was intended in the compariſon of the lightning coming out of the eaſt and ſhining even unto the weſt.

In the courſe of his hiſtory he gives us a very particular account of the prodigious numbers of ſuch as were ſlain in Judæa properly ſo called, in Samaria, the two Galilees, and the region beyond Jordan: and he confirms the prophecy of Chriſt by making a remarkable obſervation to this purpoſe, that *there was not any the leaſt part of Judæa, which did not par-*

8. The perſecution of the Apoſtles.
9. The apoſtaſy of ſome Chriſtians.

take of the calamities of the capital city. B. J. v. 3. There, at Jeruſalem, the laſt and finiſhing ſtroke was given to the ruin of the church and ſtate; for after a long and ſharp ſiege, in which famine killed as many as the ſword, in which the judgments of heaven appeared as viſibly as the fury of man, in which inteſtine factions helped on the deſolation which the foreign armies completed, Jeruſalem was at laſt taken, not then a city, but a confuſed maſs of ruins, affording a ſadder ſcene of calamity than the world had ever ſeen, and exactly fulfilling the words of Chriſt, *Mat.* xxiv. 21. *Then ſhall be great tribulation, ſuch as was not ſince the beginning of the world unto this time, no nor ever ſhall be.* To which Joſephus bears expreſs teſtimony, and ſays that *the calamities of all nations from the beginning of the world were exceeded by thoſe which befell his countrymen on this occaſion.* B. J. i. 1.

Chriſt foretold, that Jeruſalem ſhould be *encompaſſed with armies*, Luke xxi. 20. and accordingly it was beſieged and taken by the

10. A pre-

10. A preſervation of the faithful.

11. The ſpreading of the Goſpel through the Roman world.

Romans: a circumſtance which had no neceſſary connection with the revolt and conqueſt of Judæa. For at the time when Chriſt ſpake this, the Roman governor reſided in that city, and had troops there ſufficient to keep it in obedience; whence it was more probable, that Jeruſalem would have continued in a quiet ſubjection to the Romans, whatever troubles might be raiſed in other parts of the Jewiſh dominions.

He foretold, that the Roman enſigns, called *the abomination of deſolation* ver. 15. ſhould be ſeen *ſtanding in the holy place* or temple: an event not to be foreſeen by human ſkill, becauſe very unlikely to happen. The great care, which the Jews took at other times not to defile that holy place, and the ſmall ſtrength which it had to defend them long from the Roman arms, as they had twice experienced in the memory of man, were both circumſtances, which in all human appearance would have kept them from the raſh experiment. And

12. The Roman ſtandards defiling the holy place.

yet, againſt all probability, they fled to the temple, and there made a laſt and deſperate reſiſtance. Having thus defiled it with their own arms, they made it neceſſary for the Romans to follow them into the ſanctuary; ſo that they took it by ſtorm, and of conſequence cauſed their military enſigns to be *ſeen ſtanding* there.

Chriſt foretold *Matt.* xxiv. 2. that when the temple ſhould be taken, *there ſhould not be left there one ſtone upon another that ſhould not be thrown down.* And yet the building was ſo magnificent, that it was eſteemed for coſt, for art, and beauty one of the wonders of the world; whence it was natural to expect, that the Romans, according to their uſual cuſtom amidſt their conqueſts, would endeavour to preſerve it ſafe and entire. And Joſephus B. J. vi. 2. 4. tells us, that Titus laboured with all his power to ſave it, but that his ſoldiers, as if moved δαιμονίῳ ὁρμῇ, by a divine impulſe, would not hearken to his poſitive and repeated orders, but ſet fire to every part of it, till

13. The city encompaſſed with armies, walls, and trenches.

it was entirely conſumed: and then the ruins were removed, and the ſoil on which it ſtood was ploughed up, and not one ſtone left upon another. See Druſius and Calmet on *Mat.* xxiv. 2. and Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebr.* on the ſame text, where he quotes for proof of this the *Taanith* of Maimonides, c. 4. Joſephus indeed in B. J. vii. 1. ſpeaking of the temple, ſays only that it was demoliſhed, without expreſly telling us that the foundations of it were digged up. And yet it ſeems probable that ſome parts at leaſt of thoſe foundations were digged up, from what he ſays there in the following chapter concerning one Simon. He lived in Jeruſalem, in the upper part of it, near to the temple: and, when the city was taken, he endeavour'd to eſcape by letting himſelf down with ſome of his companions into a cavern; where when they had digged but a little way for themſelves, he crept out from underground in that very place where the temple had before ſtood. Therefore either he crept out in that hollow where the foundation had ſtood; or, if it was in any other

14. The retiring of the Chriſtians to the mountains.

part of the temple, the foundations muſt have been removed there at leaſt where he work'd his way through the ground from the outſide to the inſide of the temple.

To theſe circumſtances we may add the time. *This generation ſhall not paſs away, till all theſe things be fulfilled*, ver. 34. and again *Mat.* xvi. 28. *There be ſome ſtanding here, who ſhall not taſte of death, till they ſee the Son of man coming in his kingdom*; pointing out to his hearers, that this train of calamities was not to come upon the Jews immediately, nor yet ſo late but that ſome then living ſhould ſee the accompliſhment of his prophecies. The fixing of this circumſtance had no connection with any thing which might ſerve for the foundation of human conjecture.

He alſo foretold, that *the Goſpel of his kingdom ſhould be preached in all the world for a witneſs unto all nations.* ver. 14. before this end of the Jewiſh ſtate ſhould come; than which no circumſtance was leſs likely in all human appearance to happen, if we conſider

15. The greateſt tribulation that ever was known.

16. The time when theſe things ſhould happen.

17. The comparative happineſs of the barren women, when a mother killed and eat her own child.

18. Wars and rumours of wars, nation riſing againſt nation, and kingdom againſt kingdom.

19. The ſea and the waves roaring.

the time when this prophecy was delivered; for we find that within two days afterwards, as himſelf foretold, *Mat.* xxvi. 2, and 31, *all his diſciples forſook him and fled* upon his being apprehended. It could not be expected that they who had deſerted his perſon when alive, would adhere to his cauſe after his death, and with ſo much ſteddineſs and courage, as to preach a crucified Jeſus in ſpite of all oppoſition through all the nations of the then known earth. And yet this they did with great ſucceſs, ſo that St. Paul could ſay to the Coloſſians with truth, that the Goſpel was come unto them, as it was in all the world. i. 6.

20. The diſperſion of the captive Jews through all nations.

21. The continuance of the deſolation.

22. A ſhortning of the days of vengeance, for the ſake of the Elect.

All which things came to paſs.

To bring about this great event, and to certify poſterity of its truth, God raiſed up an illuſtrious and worthy Prince to accompliſh it, and an illuſtrious Hiſtorian to record it, to record the things of which he was an eye-witneſs, and in which he had born a conſiderable ſhare.

Veſpaſian was lifted up from obſcurity to the empire, he was ſtrangely ſpared and promoted and employed by Nero who hated him. If he had not put an end to the civil wars, and to the great calamities of the empire, Jeruſalem would not have been deſtroyed at the time foretold by Chriſt. *Lucem caliganti reddidit mundo,* ſays Q. Curtius, ſpeaking moſt probably of Veſpaſian, x. 9.

Joſephus aſſured Veſpaſian that he and his ſon Titus ſhould be emperors, after Nero, and ſome others, who ſhould reign only a ſhort time. *B.J.* iii. 8. *Unus ex nobilibus captivis Joſephus, cum conjiceretur in vincula, conſtantiſſime aſſeveravit fore ut ab eodem brevi ſolveretur, verum jam imperatore.* Sueton. *Tit.* 5. When Joſephus made this declaration there was no appearance of ſuch an event. He ſays that he had received the knowledge of theſe things in a dream, which was accounted by the Jews to be a lower degree of prophecy, and to have been ſometimes granted to them, after the prophetic *afflatus* had ceaſed at the death of Malachi. Joſephus ſays that Hyrcanus had been favoured with ſuch kind of revelations. *Ant.* XIII, 12. *Bell. Jud.* I. 2. He records a prophetic dream of his own, in his *Life* § 42. He mentions alſo ſtrange deliverances vouchſafed to himſelf from ſeemingly unavoidable deſtruction, *B.J.* iii. 8. He had taken ſhelter in a cave with forty deſperate perſons, who were determined to periſh rather than to yield, and who propoſed to pay him the compliment of killing him firſt, as the moſt honourable man in the company. When he could not divert them from their frantic reſolution of dying, he had no other refuge than to engage them to draw lots who ſhould be killed, the one after the other, and at laſt only he and another remained, whom he perſuaded to ſurrender to the Romans. I would not willingly be impoſed upon, or impoſe upon the reader; but I leave it to be conſidered whether in all this there might not be ſomething extraordinary, as both Veſpaſian and Joſephus were deſigned and reſerved for extraordinary purpoſes, to aſſiſt in fulfilling and juſtifying the prophecies of Daniel and of our Lord. The ſame Providence which raiſed up and conducted Cyrus, and preſerved the [b] raſh Macedonian conqueror from periſhing, till he had overthrown the Perſian empire, that the prophecies might be accompliſhed, might take the *Roman emperor* and the *Jewiſh writer* under a ſingular protection for reaſons of no leſs importance. The Hiſtorian was on all accounts a proper perſon to deliver theſe things to poſterity, and one to whom the Pagans, the Jews, and the Chriſtians could have no reaſonable objection; he was of a noble family, he had enjoyed the advantage of a good education, he had acted in the war as a General, he had much learning, ſingular abilities, a fair character, and a great love for his own country. The ſervice which he has done to Chriſtianity was on his ſide plainly undeſigned, he never gives even the remoteſt hint that the Jews ſuffered for rejecting the Meſſias. His book had the [c] approbation of Veſpaſian, and Titus, Herod, and Agrippa, and of ſeveral perſons of diſtinction, and he wanted not adverſaries who would have expoſed him if he had advanced untruths; ſo that though in ſome other points he might have been capable of deceiving and of being deceived, yet as to the tranſactions of his own times he muſt paſs, in general, for a candid, impartial, accurate writer, and has paſſed for ſuch in the opinion of the moſt competent judges.

---

[b] I call him raſh, becauſe he expoſed his own perſon too much; for his enterpriſe, though very bold, was perhaps neither raſh, nor raſhly conducted.

---

[c] Contr. Apion. i. 9.

But though we are indebted to him for ſeveral particulars, which ſurpriſingly agree with the predictions of Chriſt, yet the deſtruction of the Jewiſh ſtate reſts not upon his ſingle authority, but upon ancient hiſtory and general conſent, and is a fact which never was queſtioned.

What Joſephus ſays concerning the outrageous wickedneſs and ſtrange infatuation of many of the Jews, muſt be true; the facts related by him ſufficiently ſhew it: but the reaſon for which he dwelt ſo much on a ſubject ſo diſagreeable to one who loved his nation, ſeems to have been this; he knew not how to account otherwiſe for God's giving up his own people to ſuch calamities, and ſeeming to fight againſt them himſelf, and he was afraid of conſequences which Pagans and Chriſtians would draw from it againſt the Jewiſh religion. Cicero, becauſe it ſerved his purpoſe,

poſe, had inferred from the calamities which in his days befell the Jews, that they were a nation not acceptable to the Deity. *Stantibus Hieroſolymis, pacatiſque Judæis, tamen iſtorum religio ſacrorum a ſplendore hujus imperii, gravitate nominis noſtri, majorum inſtitutis, abhorrebat: nunc vero hoc magis, quod illa gens, quid de imperio noſtro ſentiret, oſtendit armis: quam cara diis immortalibus eſſet, docuit, quod eſt victa, quod elocata, quod* ſervata. *Pro Flacco*, 28. Some would read *ſerva*. Dr. Thirlby conjectured *ſervit*: and I find it ſo cited by Hammond in his notes on *Revel.* XIII. 5.

In his *Antiquities* he takes too great liberties with ſacred hiſtory, and accommodates it too much to the taſte of the Gentiles, which yet probably he did to recommend his oppreſſed and unhappy nation to the favour of the Greeks and Romans. There are few of his ſuppreſſions, or alterations, or embelliſhments, for which a prudential reaſon might not be aſſigned. In his *Hiſtory* he ſhews an inſtance of his art, in complimenting Titus without ſaying an untruth: he relates that Titus engaged with the Jews, who had made a ſally and fought deſperately, and that Titus himſelf ſlew twelve of their braveſt men, who headed the reſt. He ſays not how he ſlew them; but Suetonius tells us that Titus, at the ſiege of Jeruſalem, ſhot twelve of the foremoſt of the enemies with ſo many arrows. The circumſtances give great reaſon to ſuppoſe that both relate the ſame ſtory.

Καὶ δώδεκα μὲν αὐτὸς τῶν προμάχων ἀναιρεῖ. et ipſe quidem ſternit duodecim adverſi agminis propugnatores. B. J. v. vi. 6.

Noviſſima Hieroſolymorum oppugnatione, duodecim propugnatores totidem ſagittarum confecit ictibus. Sueton. *Tit.* 5.

The hiſtory of the Jewiſh war by Joſephus ſeems to be a commentary upon the prophecies of Chriſt. Joſephus, amongſt other particulars, gives a diſtinct account of the *fearful ſights and great ſigns from heaven*, which preceded the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and Tacitus has confirmed the narration of Joſephus. If Chriſt had not expreſly foretold this, many, who give little heed to portents, and who know that hiſtorians have been too credulous in that point, would have ſuſpected that Joſephus exaggerated, and that Tacitus was miſinformed; but as the teſtimonies of Joſephus and Tacitus confirm the predictions of Chriſt, ſo the predictions of Chriſt confirm the wonders recorded by theſe hiſtorians.

Let us proceed to ſhew that the predictions of Chriſt were extant before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, before A. D. 70. for this is the important point.

The books and epiſtles of the New Teſtament were written by diſciples of Chriſt, or their companions.

We cannnot ſuppoſe that any perſons, of whatſoever abilities, could have forged them after the deceaſe of the Apoſtles, for,

Theſe [d] writings contain various and numerous

---

[d] Diſc. vi. on the Chriſt. Rel.

merous incidents of time, place, perſons, names, and things; occaſional diſcourſes, differences of ſtyle, epiſtles in anſwer to epiſtles, and paſſages cited from thoſe which they anſwer, directions and obſervations ſuited to the ſtate of ſeveral Churches, seeming contradictions, and real difficulties which might have eaſily been avoided, things mentioned which worldly conſiderations would have ſuppreſſed, and things omitted which invention and imagination might have ſupplied; a character of Chriſt, ariſing from his words and actions, of a moſt ſingular kind, left to its intrinſic merit, and aided by no art; and in the writings of St. Paul, ſentiments warm, pathetic, and coming from the heart; particularities in each Goſpel ſuitable to the character, knowledge, ſituation, and circumſtances of each Evangeliſt. &c. &c.

The forgers of theſe things, if they were ſuch, muſt have equalled Father

---

[e] Harduin's crazineſs conſiſted in rejecting what all the world received; the oppoſite folly to which is the receiving what all the world rejects.

Harduin's atheiſtical Monks of the thirteenth century, who, according to his fantaſtical account, in an age of ignorance and barbarity ſurpaſſed in abilities all the ancients and moderns, forged the Latin and Greek authors whom we call Claſſical, and were not only great poets, orators, grammarians, linguiſts, and knaves, but great mathematicians, chronologers, aſtronomers, geographers, and critics, and capable of inſerting, in their proper places, names and accounts of men, rivers, cities, and regions, eclipſes of the ſun and moon, Athenian Archons, Attic months, Roman Conſuls, and Olympiads, all which happy inventions have been ſince confirmed by aſtronomical calculations and tables, voyages, inſcriptions, Faſti Capitolini, fragments, manuſcripts, and a diligent comparing of authors with each other.

There is not one page in the New Teſtament, which affords not internal characters of being compoſed by men who lived at the time when the things happened which are there related. This is as evident, as it is that the noble Engliſh hiſtorian, who wrote an account of the troubles in the time of Charles the firſt, was himſelf concerned in thoſe tranſactions. The diſcourſes of Chriſt, as I have obſerved elſewhere, are always occaſional, and full of alluſions to particular incidents. The hiſtorical parts of the New Teſtament, and the travels of Chriſt and of his Apoſtles correſpond with the accounts and deſcriptions which may be collected from other authors. In the judgment which [f] Pilate paſſed upon Chriſt, the rules of the Roman Law were obſerved. What is accidentally mentioned concerning the behaviour of Felix and Gallio, and ſome others, agrees with the character which Roman writers have given of them. There are endleſs particularities of this kind which might be produced. A man of very ordinary abilities, who relates various things of which he has been an ear and an eye-witneſs, is under no difficulty or pain: but a forger, if he had the abilities of an Angel, whoſe imagination muſt ſupply him with materials, can never write in ſuch a manner, and if he has tolerable ſenſe, will avoid entering into ſuch a minute detail, in which he muſt perpetually expoſe his ignorance and his diſhoneſty.

---

[f] Mr. Huber remarque fort bien, qu'il paroit, par toutes les circonſtances du jugement de Pilate, que toutes les regles du Droit Romain y furent exactement obſervées; et que cela peut nous convaincre de la verité de cette hiſtoire. Des gens du petit peuple parmi les Juifs, tels qu'étoient les Evangeliſtes, ne pouvoient pas être ſi bien inſtruits de cela; et s'ils ne l'avoient appriſe de témoins oculaires, ils n'auroient jamais pu la raconter, comme ils ont fait, ſans dire quelque choſe qui ſe trouveroit contraire à l'uſage des Gouverneurs, dans les provinces Romaines. *Le Clerc*, Bibl. anc. et mod. T. xiii. p. 100. See alſo *Huber* Diſſert.

Chriſt began to preach when he was about thirty years of age, and the [g]Jews from his countenance judged him to be more advanced in life. He choſe Apoſtles, ſome of whom were married, one was employed in a public office, and moſt were probably as old as himſelf, if not older. If they had not been cut off by martyrdom, yet few of them, in the courſe

---

[g] John viii. 57.

of nature, would have ſurvived the deſtruction of Jeruſalem A. D. 70. which was about 74 years after the birth of Chriſt. Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory aſſures us that St. Peter and St. Paul died before that time; and Chriſt had told Peter that he ſhould be put to death in his old age.

Hiſtory alſo informs us that St. John lived long after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and Chriſt had given an intimation that he ſhould ſee that event, for he ſaid once to his Diſciples, *There be ſome ſtanding here who ſhall not taſte of death till they ſee the Son of man coming in his kingdom*; and afterwards, when Peter was deſirous to know what ſhould befall John, Chriſt replied, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?*

St. John had ſeen the three Goſpels, for he wrote his own as a ſupplement to them, which appears plainly in the Harmony of the Evangeliſts. He omits theſe predictions of Chriſt, though he was preſent at that diſcourſe, of which omiſſion the moſt probable reaſon is, that the other three had mentioned them.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke relate that when the Jews came to ſeize Chriſt, a diſciple drew his ſword, and wounded one of them. John alone names him, and ſays that it was Simon Peter. The cauſe of their ſilence is obvious; Peter was living when they wrote, and they ſuppreſſed his name for ſeveral reaſons, but, when John wrote, Peter was dead.

The three firſt Evangeliſts make no mention of the reſurrection of Lazarus, perhaps leſt the Jews, who had conſulted to put him to death, ſhould aſſaſſinate him. When St. John wrote, it is probable that he was dead, and therefore he gave a particular account of that reſurrection.

There is reaſon to think that St. John alſo might compoſe a part at leaſt of his Goſpel a little before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, ſince he [h] ſpeaks of the porches of Betheſda as ſtanding, v. 2. though this amounts not to a full and concluſive proof, and may be a ſmall inaccuracy of ſtyle, or, it may be, thoſe porches remained undemoliſhed.

St. Luke ends his hiſtory of the Apoſtles with St. Paul's dwelling at Rome for two years, A. D. 65. He mentions nothing farther, and therefore probably wrote the Acts before the death of that Apoſtle; and he refers us to his own Goſpel, as to a book which he had publiſhed before.

Eccleſiaſtical [i] hiſtory informs us that Mark's Goſpel had the approbation of Peter, and that Mark was inſtructed by him, which opinion ſeems ſomewhat favoured by the narration of Peter's fall and repentance. Matthew and Luke ſay that he *wept bitterly*, Mark ſays only, *he wept*, but repreſents his crime in ſtronger terms than Luke. Matthew relates at large the commendation and the commiſſion which Chriſt gave to Peter: *Bleſſed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I ſay alſo unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on earth, ſhall be bound in heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* xvi. 17. Mark omits it, viii. 29.

---

[h] Ἔϛι δὲ — κολυμβήθρα. Ἦν δὲ, which is in ſome few copies, is probably the emendation of a critic.

[i] Euſeb. ii. 15.

St. Peter, who died before A. D. LXX. mentioned the approaching ruin of Jeruſalem, in the Acts of the Apoſtles[k], and in his own Epiſtles[l], as the beſt commentators agree; and ſo does St. James [m], and St. Paul [n], and the [o] Author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews.

---

[k] *And I will ſhew wonders in heaven above, and ſigns in the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and pillars of ſmoke. The ſun ſhall be turned into darkneſs, and the moon into blood, before that great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it ſhall come to paſs, that whoſoever ſhall call upon the Name of the Lord, ſhall be ſaved,* Acts ii. 19.

[l] *But the end of all things is at hand.—The time is*

Papias converſed with the diſciples of the Apoſtles about the beginning of the ſecond century. He [p] ſpeaks of the Goſpels of Matthew and Mark as extant, and written by them.

---

come, that judgment muſt begin at the houſe of God. And if it firſt begin with us, what will be the end of them that obey not the Goſpel of God? And if the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear? 1 Pet. iv. 7.

[m] *Go to now, ye rich Men, weep and howl for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you. — Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of our Lord.—For the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.—The Judge ſtandeth before the door.* James v. 1.

[n] *The Lord is at hand.* Phil. iv. 5. *To fill up their ſins always; for wrath is come upon them to the uttermoſt.* 1 Theſſ. xi. 16. *The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night.* &c. 1 Theſſ. v. 2. The ſame event is alſo perhaps alluded to, 2 Theſſ. i. 6, *&c.* and 2 Theſſ. ii. 2, *&c.*

[o] *Ye have need of patience that —ye might receive the promiſe. For yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come,* &c. Heb. x. 36.

[p] Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. iii. 39, *ſub finem.*

Juſtin Martyr, A. D. CL, mentions the Goſpels as univerſally received and read in the congregations, in his time. He muſt have converſed with Chriſtians who were old men, and from them have learned that the Goſpels were extant when they were young. Οἱ Ἀπόστολοι (ſays he) *ἐν τοῖς γενομένοις ὑπ᾽ αὐτῶν ἀπομνημονεύμασιν, ἃ καλεῖται* Εὐαγγέλια, *οὕτως παρέδωκαν* — And again, Τὰ *ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν* Ἀποστόλων *ἀναγινώσκεται*. Apol. I. And his citations from the four Goſpels, from the Epiſtles of St. Paul, and from the Revelation, ſhew to a demonſtration that he had them as we now have them, in the main.

In the interval between A. D. LXX. and Juſtin, are the authors called Apoſtolical, as *Clemens*, *Hermas*, *Barnabas*, *Ignatius*. Theſe authors make uſe of ſome of the Goſpels and Epiſtles, and allude to them; which makes them highly valuable, and ſerviceable to the Chriſtian cauſe. We cannot ſuppoſe that they had the inclination, we may poſitively affirm that they had not the capacity to forge them. Their own writings prove it.

Barnabas, in his *Epiſtle*, makes uſe of *Matthew*, *Luke*, *John*, and the *Epiſtle to the Romans.*

Clemens, in his *firſt Epiſtle*, makes mention of St. *Paul's Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*, and takes paſſages from *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, *Acts*, *Romans*, 1 and 2 *Cor*. *Philip*. 1 *Theſſ*. *Epheſ*. 1 and 2 of *Peter*, 1 *Tim*. 1 and 3 of *John*, *Revel*. and particularly from the *Epiſtle to the Hebrews*. He alſo ſpeaks of the Martyrdom of Peter and Paul.

In his *ſecond Epiſtle*, if it be his, there are paſſages from *Matthew*, *Luke*, 1 *Cor*. and *Hebr*.

Hermas ſays, i. 2. *Juravit Dominus per Filium ſuum: Qui denegaverit filium & ſe—& ipſi denegaturi ſunt illum*—from *Mat*. x. 33.

I. 6. *Cum ergo venerit tribulatio, propter divitias ſuas & negotiationes, abnegant Dominum* — from *Mat*. xiii. 21.

I. 9. *Vi-*

I. 9. *Videte ergo vos qui gloriamini in divitiis, ne forte ingemiſcant ii qui egent, & gemitus eorum aſcendat ad Dominum* — from *James* v. 4.

Ib. *Qui amatis primos conſeſſus*; from *Mat.* xxiii. 6. *Melius erat illis non naſci.* from *Mat.* xxvi. 24.

II. Mand. v. *Spiritus ſanctus, qui in te eſt, anguſtiabitur*; from *Epheſ.* iv. 30. *Si reſiſtis Diabolo, fugiet a te*; from *James* iv. 7.

II. Mand. vi. Φοβήθητι τὸν Κύριον τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι καὶ ἀπολέσαι· from *James* iv. 12.

Such references ſhould have been marked in the editions of the *Apoſtolical Fathers*.

In the *Apoſtolical Conſtitutions* alſo, and in the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies* of *Pſeudo-Clemens* there are many paſſages taken from the New Teſtament; but as theſe books are not ſo ancient as they pretend to be, I paſs them by for the pre-

ſent,

ſent, and ſhall pay my reſpects to them in another place.

The numerous and large citations from the LXX, and the New Teſtament, in the *Conſtitutions*, are however ſo far uſeful, that they help to ſhew how thoſe places ſtood in the copies of the fourth century, and perhaps ſomewhat earlier.

Ignatius, who in his old age ſuffered under Trajan, about A. D. CVII, and who was contemporary with the Apoſtles, in his genuine Epiſtles alludes to the Goſpels of *Matthew*, of *Luke*, and of *John*, *Paul's firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians*, thoſe to the *Coloſſians*, *Galatians*, *Philippians*, and *Epheſians*, the *firſt Epiſtle of Peter*, &c.

Beſides the places which are referred to in the margin of the *Patres Apoſtolici*, I have obſerved ſeveral, upon a curſory peruſal, to which, I am ſenſible, more might be added.

Ignatius ad *Epheſ.* μιμηταὶ ὄντες Θεοῦ. from *Epheſ.* v. 1.

Ib. ἐν αἵματι Θεοῦ. perhaps from *Acts* xx. 28.

Ib. τοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἑαυτὸν ἀνενεγκόντος Θεῷ προσφορὰν καὶ θυσίαν. from *Epheſ.* v. 2.

Ib. ii. ὀναίμην ὑμῶν, from *Philem.* 20.

Ib. iv. μέλη ὄντας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ. from *Eph.* v. 30.

Ib. v. εἰ γὰρ ἑνὸς καὶ δευτέρου προσευχὴ τοσαύτην ἰσχὺν ἔχει. perhaps from *James* v. 16. or *Mat.* xviii. 19, 20.

Ib. ix. — λίθοι ναοῦ Πατρὸς — εἰς οἰκοδομὴν — from *Epheſ.* ii. 20.

Ib. xiii. τέλος δὲ ἀγάπη. from 1 *Tim.* i. 5.

Ib. xiv. ἄμεινόν ἐστιν σιωπᾷν καὶ εἶναι, ἢ λαλοῦντα μὴ εἶναι· καλὸν τὸ διδάσκειν, ἐὰν ὁ λέγων ποιῇ. from *Mat.* v. 19. vii. 21.

Ib. xv. οὐδὲν λανθάνει τὸν Κύριον — perhaps from *Heb.* iv. 12, 13. or *Revel.* ii. 23. or from other places.

Ib. xvii. τȣ͂ ἄρχοντος τȣ͂ αἰῶνος τȣ́τȣ. from *John* xiv. 30. and *Epheſ.* ii. 2.

Ib. μὴ αἰχμαλωτίσῃ ὑμᾶς. from *Rom.* vii. 23.

Ib. xix. μυστήρια — πῶς ȣ͂ν ἐφανερώθη — from 1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

Ib. xx. ἕνα ἄρτον κλῶντες. from 1 *Cor.* x. 17.

Ib. xxi. ἔσχατος ὢν τῶν ἐκεῖ πιστῶν. from 1 *Cor.* xv. 9. or *Mat.* xx. 26, 27.

Ib. xii. Ignatius takes notice of *St. Paul's Epiſtle to the Epheſians*, and of his martyrdom: and as he was writing to the ſame Church, he often alludes, as you ſee, to the Apoſtle's letter.

Ad Magneſ. i. ἀγάπης, ἧς ȣ̓δὲν προκέκριται. from 1 *Cor.* xiii. 13.

Ib. iii. — νεωτερικὴν τάξιν — perhaps from 1 *Tim.* iv. 12.

Ib. v. εἰς τὸν ἴδιον τόπον. from *Acts* i. 25.

Ib. ἴδιον χαρακτῆρα. perhaps from *Rev.* xiii. 17.

Ib. vii. — εἷς νοῦς, μία ἐλπὶς — from *Epheſ.* iv. 3, 4, 5, 6.

Ib. viii. εἰ κατὰ νόμον ζῶμεν, ὁμολογοῦμεν χάριν μὴ εἰληφέναι. from *Galat.* v. 4.

Ib. x. ὑπέρθεσθε τὴν κακὴν ζύμην τὴν παλαιωθεῖσαν. from 1 *Cor.* v. 7.

Ib. xiii. καταδουλωθῆτε. δουλοῦσθαι, a Verb uſed in the New Teſtament.

Ad. Trall. vii. μὴ φυσιουμένοις. a word often uſed by St. Paul.

Ib. viii. μηδεὶς [τὶ] κατὰ τοῦ πλησίου ἐχέτω. from *Mat.* v. 23.

Ib. x. — ὥσπερ τινὲς — λέγουσι — ἐγὼ τί δέδεμαι; τί εὔχομαι θηριομαχῆσαι; &c. from 1 *Cor.* xv. 15, 32.

Ib. xi. οὐκ εἰσὶν φυτεία Πατρός. from *Mat.* xv. 13.

Ib. xii. ἵνα μὴ ἀδόκιμος εὑρεθῶ. from 1 *Cor.* ix. 27.

Ad Roman. ii. — τοῦ σπονδισθῆναι Θεῷ. from 2 *Tim.* iv. 6.

Ib. iii. τὰ γὰρ φαινόμενα πρόσκαιρα· τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια. from 2 *Cor.* iv. 18.

Ib. vi. τί γὰρ ὠφελεῖται — &c. from *Mat.* xvi. 26. But perhaps this is an interpolation. It is not in the old verſion.

Ib. vii. ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται — ὕδωρ δὲ ζῶν, καὶ λαλοῦν ἐν ἐμοὶ — from *Galat.* vi. 14. *John* iv. 14.

Ib. ix. ἔκτρωμα. from 1 *Cor.* xv. 8.

Ad Philadelph. vi. — ὅτι ἐβάρησά τινα — from 2 *Cor.* xii. 16.

Ib. ix. αὐτὸς ὢν θύρα. from *John* x. 7.

Ib. x. ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ γινομένοις. from 1 *Cor.* xi. 20.

Ad Smyrn. iii. συνέφαγεν καὶ συνέπιεν. from *Acts* x. 41.

Ib. iv. — μὴ ϖαραδέχεσθε — from *John* Epiſt. ii. 10.

Ib. x. τὰ δεσμά μου — οὐκ ἐπαισχύνθητε, read ἐπησχύνθητε. from 2 *Tim.* i. 16.

Ib. οὐδὲ ὑμᾶς ἐπαισχυνθήσεται Χριστός. from *Mark* viii. 38 or *Luke* ix. 26.

The *Epiſtle* to *Polycarp*, which is the laſt, is alſo inferior to the reſt: there is ſome reaſon to ſuſpect that it is not genuine.

Ad Philadelph. v.—ϖροσφυγὼν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, ὡς σαρκὶ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ τοῖς ἀποστόλοις ὡς ϖρεσβυτερίῳ ἐκκλησίας. *Confugiens ad Evangelium tanquam ad carnem Jeſu, et ad Apoſtolos velut ad Eccleſiæ Preſbyterium*, &c.

Quæ verba videntur de Evangeliis et Apoſtolicis ſcriptis intelligenda; ita ut hoc velit Ignatius, cognoſcendæ divinæ voluntatis causâ, ſe confugere ad Evangelia, quibus crederet non ſecus ac ſi Chriſtus ipſe in carne, *hoc eſt, in eo ſtatu quo fuit in terris, conſpicuus et etiamnum apud homines vivens, eos ſermones, qui*

qui in Evangeliis leguntur, ore ſuo proferret; tum etiam ad ſcripta Apoſtolorum, quos habebat quaſi totius Chriſtianæ Eccleſiæ Preſbyterium, *ſub Chriſto omnium Epiſcopo, quod cœtus Chriſtianos omnes, quid credendum ſit, doceret. Unde quanti fierent Libri ſacri Novi Teſtamenti, hiſce temporibus, ſatis liquet. Addit:* Sed et Prophetas amamus, quia ipſi nunciarunt, quæ pertinent ad Evangelium, id ſperarunt, atque expectarunt. *Quæ reſpiciunt Vetus Teſtamentum, prout ſcriptum exſtat, nam aliunde Prophetæ Ignatio innoteſcere non potuerant. Nec leviter prætermittendum, ab eo, primo quidem loco Novi Teſtamenti ſcripta, per quæ Chriſtiani ſumus, memorari, quaſi perfugium ſuum; ſecundo verò Veteris Libros, quia ex iis Novum confirmari poteſt.* Clericus, *Hiſt. Eccl.* p. 567.

In the ſame Epiſtle, viii. Ignatius introduces a Jew, ſaying, ἐὰν μὴ ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις εὕρω, ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ οὐ πιστεύω. *Niſi invenero in antiquis (vaticiniis) Evangelio non credo.* Where ſee Le Clerc.

Ad Smyrn. v. οὓς οὐκ ἔπεισαν αἱ προφητεῖαι, οὐδ' ὁ νόμος Μωσέως, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μεχρὶ νῦν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. *Quibus nec prophetiæ perſuaſere, nec Moſis lex, ſed nec Evangelium.* He ſpeaks of heretics, who denied that Chriſt had a body, and that he really ſuffered. How were ſuch people to be converted or confuted? By the teſtimony of the Apoſtles, recorded in the New Teſtament; of men, who, as Ignatius ſays, did eat and drink with the Lord, both before and after his reſurrection: conſequently Εὐαγγέλιον in this place means the Goſpels, the books of the New Teſtament.

Ib. vii. προσέχειν δὲ τοῖς προφήταις, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, ἐν ᾧ τὸ πάθος ἡμῖν δεδήλωται, καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τετελείωται. *Attendere autem prophetis, præcipue autem Evangelio, in quo paſſio nobis oſtenſa, et reſurrectio perfecta eſt.*

Thus the *ſhorter Epiſtles* of Ignatius allude to the writings of the Apoſtles; but in the *larger Epiſtles,* which are generally ſuppoſed to be *interpolated*, the paſſages of the Old and New Teſtament are more numerous, and cited more accurately and directly, and ſometimes impertinently, as in the *Conſtitutions*, and introduced with, Thus ſaith our Lord, Thus ſays Paul, and Peter, and Luke, and, Thus ſay the Scriptures. The Apoſtolical Fathers rather allude than cite; and therefore the hand of the Forger diſcovers itſelf in theſe *larger Epiſtles*.

Ignatius wrote his Letters when he was condemned, and chained, and guarded, and conducted by ſoldiers, who were mere brutes, and uſed him ill; οἳ καὶ εὐεργετούμενοι χείρους γίνονται· ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀδικήμασιν αὐτῶν μᾶλλον μαθητεύομαι. *Qui et beneficio affecti, pejores fiunt: at ego eorum injuriis magis erudior*, or, *Chriſti diſcipulus fio*. Ad Rom. v. We may juſtly ſuppoſe, and the word εὐεργητούμενοι implies it, that the Chriſtians who attended this moſt venerable Biſhop and Martyr, and reſorted to him on his journey to Rome, gave money to his guards, that they might be permitted to converſe with him, and to miniſter to him, and that he might have leave to write and ſend his Letters: and this ſmall indulgence was granted by thoſe ruffians with an ill grace, and in an inſolent manner. Therefore it is more probable that the *ſhorter* Epiſtles ſhould be genuine than the *larger*, with their pomp and parade of paſſages from the Old and New Teſtament, which

—ſeceſſum ſcribentis et otia quærunt.

In the *interpolated Epiſtles* of Ignatius, *Ad Epheſ.* v. λέγει δὲ καὶ ὁ Κύριος πρὸς τοὺς ἱερεῖς· ὁ ὑμῶν ἀκούων, ἐμοῦ ἀκούει. *The Lord ſays to the Prieſts, He that heareth you, heareth me*, &c. From *Luke* x. 16. A very ſuſpicious phraſe: why does this writer call the Diſciples Prieſts?

Ib. xii. ἐγὼ ἐλάχιστος Ἰγνάτιος — ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος Ἄβελ τοῦ δικαίου ἕως τοῦ αἵματος Ἰγνατίου ἐλάχιστος. *Ego minimus Ignatius — minimus a ſanguine Abelis juſti uſque ad Ignatii ſanguinem.*

In this application of Scripture there is a vanity, under a feigned modeſty, which ill ſuits with this humble and pious Martyr, who as yet had not ſhed his blood.

Ad Magneſ. iii. Δανιὴλ μὲν γὰρ ὁ σοφὸς, δωδεκαετὴς, γέγονε κάτοχος τῷ Θείῳ πνεύματι. *Daniel enim ille ſapiens, quum duodecim eſſet annorum, ſpiritu divino afflatus eſt.* A childiſh romance; and what follows is no better.

Ad Philad. iv. οἱ ἄρχοντες πειθαρχείτωσαν τῷ Καίσαρι, οἱ στρατιῶται τοῖς ἄρχουσιν. *Principes obediant Cæſari, milites principibus.*

This ſmells of interpolation: Ignatius addreſſes himſelf, not to Pagans, but to Chriſtians; and it may be queſtioned whether in his time there were Chriſtian officers and ſoldiers in the Roman army. See Moyle's Letters concerning the *Thundering Legion*, whoſe arguments in behalf of the negative are very ſtrong.

Ad Smyrn. v. ſpeaking of heretics, he ſays, τὰ δὲ ὀνόματα αὐτῶν, ὄντα ἄπιστα, νῦν οὐκ ἔδοξέ μοι ἐγγράψαι· μηδὲ γένοιτό με αὐτῶν μνημονεύειν, μέχρις οὗ μετανοήσωσιν. *Nomina* *vero eorum, cum ſint infidelia, non viſum eſt mihi [nunc] ſcribere: et vero abſit a me ut eorum mentionem faciam, donec pœnitentiâ ducantur.*

And accordingly, the genuine Ignatius mentions not, I think, the name of any Heretic. But how doth this agree with the catalogue of Heretics in the *interpolated* Epiſtle *ad Trallianos*, where he names Simon, Menander, Baſilides, the Nicola[illegible]e, Theodotus, Cleobulus? The Interpolator ſeems to have been aware of it, and therefore he has ſlyly inſerted a νῦν· νῦν οὐκ ἔδοξε, *at this time I will not name them.* In the *ſhorter* Epiſtle we have οὐκ ἔδοξε without the νῦν. Obſerve that the *nunc* is not in the Latin tranſlation joined to the interpolated Epiſtles; but it is omitted or dropped by ſome accident, for it is in the ancient Latin verſion of the interpolated Epiſtles, — *non eſt mihi nunc viſum ſcribere.*

Ib. ix. Τίμα, φησὶν, υἱὲ τὸν Θεὸν καὶ βασιλέα. ἐγὼ δέ φημι· τίμα μὲν τὸν Θεὸν, ὡς αἴτιον τῶν ὅλων καὶ κύριον· ἐπίσκοπον δὲ, ὡς ἀρχιερέα,

Θεοῦ εἰκόνα φοροῦντα· κατὰ μὲν τὸ ἄρχειν, Θεοῦ, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἱερατεύειν, Χριστοῦ· καὶ μετὰ τοῦτον, τιμᾷν χρὴ καὶ βασιλέα. *My Son, ſays Solomon, honour God and the King : but I ſay unto you, Honour God, as the Author and the Lord of all, and the Biſhop, as the high-prieſt, who bears the image of God, of God, as he is a Ruler, and of Chriſt, as he is a prieſt. And after him, honour the King alſo.*

The author of this commandment, in all probability, was a Biſhop, but not ſuch a Biſhop as Ignatius. *The Scripture ſays — But I ſay — I who am wiſer and greater than Solomon.* A very modeſt ſpeech truly, and much in character, and becoming the meek Ignatius !

Here the Biſhop is equalled, or rather, is preferred to Jeſus Chriſt ; for Chriſt is not ſuppoſed to be ἄρχων, a *Ruler,* though he be *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*

After this homage is paid to the Biſhop, leave is given to the Chriſtians to honour

Cæſar. How condeſcending and gracious, and how well contrived to make the Roman Emperors very fond of their Chriſtian ſubjects! But this is altogether in the ſtyle of the *Apoſtolical Conſtitutions.*

Ib. He ſays to thoſe who had ſhewed him kindneſs, ὁ τιμῶν δέσμιον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, μαρτύρων λήψεται μίσθον. *Qui honorat vinctum Jeſu Chriſti, Martyrum accipiet mercedem.*

Ignatius would not have ſpoken thus of himſelf.

There are in theſe Epiſtles a multitude of places which agree with the *Conſtitutions*; the one certainly tranſcribes the other, and both are of the ſame ſtamp, *ejuſdem farinæ*[q].

Polycarp, in his Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, ſuppoſed to be written about A. D.

---

[q] The Reader is deſired to obſerve, that theſe *larger* Epiſtles have been examined, and condemned, as *interpolated*, by Uſher, Pearſon, Hammond, Cotelerius, Iſ. Voſſius, Le Clerc, and many others, to whoſe objections and arguments I have endeavoured here to add a few more, and ſhall add ſomething further, when I come to ſpeak of Ignatius.

CVII. has paſſages and expreſſions from *Matthew, Luke, the Acts, St. Paul's Epiſtles to the Philippians, Epheſians, Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, Theſſalonians, Coloſſians,* 1 *Timothy,* 1 *Ep. of John, and* 1 *of Peter,* and makes particular mention of *St. Paul's Epiſtle* to the *Epheſians.* Indeed his whole Epiſtle conſiſts of phraſes and ſentiments taken from the New Teſtament. To the references in the margin might be added,

iii. *ἥτις ἐϛὶ μήτηρ πάντων ὑμῶν.* from *Galat.* iv. 26.

vi. *Πάντα ἡμῶν σκοπεῖται,* (or *μωμοσκοπεῖται*) *ϗ λέληθεν αὐτὸν ȣ̓δὲν, ȣ̎τε λογισμῶν, ȣ̎τε ἐννοιῶν, ȣ̎τε τι τῶν κρυπτῶν τῆς καρδίας.* This is manifeſtly taken from *Heb.* iv. 12, 13.

The Heretics alſo, who were contemporaries with the Apoſtles and Apoſtolical Fathers, bear their teſtimony to the exiſtence of the New Teſtament, and moſt of them had their forged or interpolated Goſpels and Epiſtles, as knowing that without ſomething of this kind they could not hope to get and retain any followers.

Simon the magician, and his diſciples, are ſaid to have compoſed books for the propagation of their ſtupid doctrines, and to have aſcribed thoſe books to Chriſt and to the Apoſtles, that they might impoſe them upon ſilly people. If ſo, this was done in oppoſition to the books of the New Teſtament, and in imitation of them.

The Chriſtians afterwards were even with this Reprobate, for they related many an idle ſtory about *him*, and alſo made him a more conſiderable Impoſtor than probably he ever was, though he ſeduced ſeveral poor wretches.

The Gnoſtics admitted ſome, and rejected other parts of the New Teſtament.

The Cerinthians received part of St. Matthew's Goſpel; and rejected every thing elſe, particularly the Epiſtles of St. Paul, whom they had in great abomination.

The Ebionites and Nazarenes had a Goſpel according to the Hebrews, or a Hebrew Goſpel of St. Matthew corrupted and interpolated; they had alſo other forged books bearing the names of Apoſtles.

The Baſilidians admitted the New Teſtament, but with ſuch alterations as they judged proper: and ſo did the Valentinians.

The Carpocratians made uſe of the Goſpel of St. Matthew.

See Tillemont *Hiſt. Eccl.* ii. p. 41, 51, 59, 109, 220, 225, 261. *Quarto Edit.* to which I ſhall always refer.

Theſe old Heretics went about in queſt of fools, whom they had the art to turn into madmen:

—*hic homines prorſum ex ſtultis inſanos facit.*

an art, which is not to be reckoned amongſt the *deperdita.*

Before the end of the firſt century, the world was peſtered with the diſciples of Simon, Menander, Saturninus, and Baſilides, concerning whom ſee Le Clerc, *Hiſt. Eccl.*

The Baſilidians made three hundred and ſixty five heavens, and were better caſtle-builders than thoſe who give us ſchemes of the *ſeven heavens*, which is a poor inconſiderable number. Baſilides required of his followers five years ſilence, *which was a proper method*, as Le Clerc obſerves, *to make an experiment of their folly*; *and indeed he might be ſure that the ſcholar was mad in good earneſt, who with a profound ſubmiſſion and ſilence had paid ſo long an attendance on a Knave that taught and did a thouſand abſurdities.*

Baſilides, in all probability, only required this ſilence from his diſciples, when they were in his company, and was ſo great a talker, that he ſuffered no body elſe to put in a word. His Lectures upon the three hundred and ſixty five heavens could not take up leſs time than a year, and he would never have ended them; if he had been interrupted, and obliged to anſwer doubters and cavillers.

The predictions of Chriſt concerning the calamities of the *Jews* could not have been inſerted as interpolations after the event:

Becauſe they are incidentally placed up and down[r] in the Goſpels, by way of parable, or in anſwer to queſtions, or on account of ſome circumſtance of time and place bringing on the diſcourſe:

---

[r] For example:

Matt. v. 5. *Bleſſed are the meek: for they ſhall inherit the earth.*

This was literally fulfilled, when the believing Jews returned to their own country, after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem.

x. 23. *Ye ſhall not have gone over the cities of Iſrael, till the Son of Man be come.*

xv. 13. *Every Plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, ſhall be rooted up.*

xvi. 28. *There be ſome ſtanding here, who ſhall not taſte of death, till* &c.

xxi. 19. *preſently the fig-tree withered away.*

xxi. 41. *He will miſerably deſtroy thoſe wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other huſbandmen*, &c.

xxi. 44. *On whomſoever it ſhall fall, it will grind him to powder.*

xxii. 7. *he ſent forth his armies, and deſtroyed thoſe murderers, and burnt up their city.*

xxiii. 36. *all theſe things ſhall come upon this generation.*

Luke xi. 50. *That the blood of the prophets — may be required of this generation.*

xiii. 5. *except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.*

xiii. 9. *If it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that, thou ſhalt cut it down.*

xvii. 24. *As the lightning — ſo ſhall the Son of man be in his day.*

xix. 27. *Thoſe mine enemies which would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring hither, and ſlay them before me.*

xix. 42. *If thou hadſt known, even thou,* &c.

xxiii. 28. *Daughters of Jeruſalem, weep not for me,* &c.

John v. 21. *The hour cometh when ye ſhall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jeruſalem worſhip the Father.*

xxi. 22. *If I will that he tarry till I come,* &c.

To theſe muſt be added the parallel places from the other Goſpels, and the prophecy of John the Baptiſt, *Matt.* iii. 10. *And now alſo the axe is laid to the root of the tree; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and caſt into the fire,* &c.

Becauſe the books of the New Teſtament were received by Chriſtians, and copied, and widely diſperſed, and perhaps tranſlated, from their firſt appearance;

Becauſe theſe predictions in the Goſpels are alluded to, or the ſame thing is taught, in other parts of the New Teſtament:

Becauſe no Jews or Pagans ever reproached the Chriſtians with inſerting them, not *Trypho*, not *Celſus*[s], not *Porphyry*, not *Julian*. The objections of *Trypho*[t] are to be found in *Juſtin Martyr*,

---

[s] Whom ſome people call a Jew: they might as well call him a Quaker, or a Muggletonian. The man was not even a Proſelyte of the Gate, but a mere Epicurean Philoſopher, who, if proper pains had been taken with him, might poſſibly have become a Sadducee.

[t] *Trypho* had peruſed the Goſpels, and ſays to Juſtin, ὑμῶν δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ λεγομένῳ Εὐαγγελίῳ παραγγέλματα θαυμαστὰ οὕτως καὶ μεγάλα ἐπίσταμαι εἶναι, ὡς ὑπολαμβάνειν μηδένα δύνασθαι φυλάξαι αὐτά· ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἐμέλησεν ἐντυχεῖν αὐτοῖς. *Sed & veſtra illa in eo, quod vocatis, Evangelio præcepta ita mirabilia et magna eſſe ſcio, ut ſuſpicio ſit neminem ea poſſe ſervare; mihi enim curæ fuit, ut ea legerem.* Dial. cum Tryph.

tyr, thoſe of *Celſus* in *Origen*, thoſe of *Porphyry* in *Holſtenius* Vit. Porph. ch. xi. and *Julian's* in his own works and in *Cyril*:

Becauſe there is in them a mixture of obſcurity, and needleſs difficulty, needleſs if they were forged. Chriſt foretold the deſtruction of the city and temple, and the calamities of the Jews, fully and clearly: but being aſked when this ſhould be, he gave an anſwer in a ſublime and prophetic ſtyle, ſaying that the ſun ſhould be darkened, and the moon ſhould not give her light, and the ſtars ſhould fall from heaven, &c. which would not be eaſily underſtood, if learned and judicious commentators had not cleared it up; and this he might poſſibly do to perplex the unbelieving perſecuting Jews, if his diſcourſes ſhould ever fall into their hands, that they might not learn to avoid the impending evil. The believing Jews themſelves, notwithſtanding this prediction, ſtood in need of a ſecond admonition, and were divinely warned to fly from Jeruſalem,

lem, ſay Euſebius and Epiphanius [v]. See Euſeb. iii. 5. and the notes. So loath are people to leave their own houſe and home, even when they ſee Deſtruction at the door:

Becauſe Chriſt not only foretold the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, but the continuance of that deſolation. *Jeruſalem,* ſays he, *ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles till the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* Take what interpretation you will, ſo it be not abſurd, and add to it a matter of fact, namely, the ſtate of the Jews ever ſince, and it muſt be owned that a conſiderable length of time is implied:

---

[v] Οἱ γȣ̃ν Ἀπόςολοι καὶ μαθηταὶ τȣ̃ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐξ Ἰȣδαίων εἰς αὐτὸν πεπιςευκότες, μακρὰν τῆς Ἰȣδαίας γῆς γενόμενοι, καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐπισπαρέντες, τὸν κατὰ τῶν οἰκȣ́ντων τὴν πόλιν ὄλεθρον διαδρᾶναι τότε ἐδυνήθησαν. *Ipſi Apoſtoli ac diſcipuli Salvatoris noſtri, et omnes, qui ex Judæis ad ipſum credentes acceſſerant, cum procul ab Judæa terra abeſſent, et reliquis eſſent immixti gentibus, omnem eorum, qui civitatem incolebant, perditionem atque interitum effugere per illud tempus facile potuerunt.* Euſeb. *Dem. Evang.* vi. 287.

Becauſe Chriſt declared that theſe evils ſhould befal them for not knowing the time of their viſitation, and for rejecting him; whence it followed, that as long as their rebellion and diſobedience continued, the ſentence againſt them would not be reverſed.

If it ſhould be ſaid that Chriſt, as a wiſe and ſagacious man, might foreſee the ſtorm,

Ἔσσεται ἦμαρ, ὅτ' ἄν ποτ' ὀλώλῃ Ἴλιος ἱρὴ [*],

this would be a diſingenuous ſhift to evade a plain truth. Chriſt would not have acted ſuitably to his character and uſual conduct, and to common prudence, if he had ſtaked his reputation on conjectures; and in the reign of Tiberius there was no appearance of ſuch an event, and much leſs of the various circumſtances attending it, which he foretold. The Romans had no intereſt to deſtroy and depopulate a country which was ſubject to them, and whence they reaped many advantages, and the Jews had not ſtrength to hope for ſucceſs in a war againſt them.

---

[*] *The day will come, when ſacred Troy ſhall fall:*

If it ſhould be ſaid that Chriſt took his prophecies from Daniel, his juſt interpretation of Daniel ſhews him to be the Meſſias mentioned by Daniel, ſince none beſides himſelf at that time had even a tolerable claim to that character. Daniel foretold, that in ſeventy weeks of years, or four hundred and ninety years, a moſt holy perſon ſhould be anointed; that this Meſſias ſhould be cut off; that a prince ſhould come with an army, and cauſe the ſacrifices to ceaſe, and plant abominable idols in the holy place, and deſtroy the city and temple, and make the land utterly deſolate, and put an end to the Jewiſh polity. *ch.* ix. But Chriſt is more explicit and circumſtantial than Daniel, and in many reſpects his prediction was new and altogether his own.

Joſephus ſays that the *Zealots* trampled under foot all laws divine and human, and made a jeſt of their own ſacred books, and derided the writings of the prophets.

ἐγελᾶτο δὲ τὰ θεῖα, καὶ τοὺς τῶν προφητῶν θεσμοὺς ὥσπερ ἀγυρτικὰς λογοποιΐας ἐχλεύαζον — *divina autem quæque deridebantur, et prophetarum oracula ut præſtigiatorum commenta ſubſannabant* — ἦν γὰρ δή τις παλαιὸς λόγος ἀνδρῶν, ἔνθα τότε τὴν πόλιν ἁλώσεσθαι, καὶ καταφλεγήσεσθαι τὰ ἅγια νόμῳ πολέμου, στάσις ἐὰν κατασκήψῃ, καὶ χεῖρες οἰκεῖαι προμιάνωσι τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ τέμενος· οἷς 'ΟΥΚ ἀπιστήσαντες οἱ ζηλωταὶ διακόνους ἑαυτοὺς ἐπέδοσαν. *Vetus enim virorum ſermo quidem erat, tum urbem captum iri, et loca ſancta conflagratura jure belli, ubi ſeditio invaſerit, et indigenarum manus polluerint ſacratum Deo locum. Quibus licet fidem* NON *detraherent Zelotæ, tamen ipſi ſe earum rerum miniſtros præbuerunt.* B. J. iv. 6. This ſeems to have been a traditionary interpretation of Daniel, a λόγος, a report, and not a written prophecy. But here is a negative which ſeems to contradict what was ſaid before. It ſhould perhaps be οἷς ἀπιστήσαντες — or ſomething to the ſame effect, and the meaning may be, that the impious Zealots cauſed thoſe prophecies to be fulfilled in the deſtruction of themſelves and their nation,

tion, which they had ridiculed and diſbelieved.

Many of the firſt Chriſtians, who were Jews dwelling in Judæa, ſold their lands and poſſeſſions. The Gentiles did it not when the Goſpel came to them, and none of St. Paul's Epiſtles contain any ſuch precept, or intimate any ſuch practice. The Jews acted thus, though not by the command, yet doubtleſs with the approbation of the Apoſtles, and the moſt probable reaſon for it was this ; They knew that Chriſt had foretold the deſtruction of their country, which ſhould come upon it before that generation were paſſed away, and therefore they thought it proper, whilſt there was opportunity, to improve to the beſt uſe their eſtates, which they ſhould not long enjoy, by relieving their poorer brethren, and by enabling the firſt teachers to purſue their travels from place to place. Therefore alſo when the Goſpel was ſpread amongſt the Gentiles, the Apoſtles were careful to make collections in their churches for the relief of the poor ſaints at Jeruſalem, ſince it was juſt that a proviſion ſhould be made for thoſe who had given up all for the common good, and at whoſe charges the Goſpel was at firſt preached amongſt ſome of the Gentiles. See *Joſ. Mede* Diſc. on *Prov.* xxxvii. 7.

We read in the Acts of the Apoſtles that the Jews ſuborned and ſet up falſe witneſſes againſt Stephen, who ſaid, *We have heard him ſay, that this Jeſus of Nazareth ſhall deſtroy this holy place, and ſhall change the cuſtoms which Moſes delivered us.* Now though theſe were calumniators, yet probably ſomething had been ſaid, which gave occaſion to the accuſation, and St. Stephen had been heard to mention the approaching deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and the inferiority of the ceremonial to the moral Law. See Grotius.

This is one reaſon why the unbelieving Jews hated the diſciples of Chriſt ſo implacably, because *they did not propheſy good* concerning the nation, *but evil.*

Μάντι κακῶν, οὐ πώποτέ μοι τὸ κρήγυον εἶπας.

The Author of the *Recognitions of Clemens* introduces St. Peter telling the Jews that the temple would be deſtroyed, and adds, well enough, that upon this all the prieſts were highly enraged. i. 64.

The deſtruction of the Jewiſh nation is not mentioned by Jeſus Chriſt, as a threatned calamity which might be averted by repentance, but as a decree which was fixed and unalterable. *If thou hadſt known* &c. *but now they are hid from thine eyes.* —— *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but my words ſhall not paſs away*: that is, ſooner ſhall heaven and earth paſs away, than my predictions paſs away unfulfilled. The beſt and the moſt probable method, by which a Jew might ſecure himſelf from being involved in this national evil, was to embrace Chriſtianity: for which, amongſt other reaſons, St. Paul ſays to the Jews; *Beware therefore leſt that come upon you which is ſpoken of in the Prophets: Behold, ye deſpiſers, and wonder, and periſh, for I work a work in your days, a work which ye ſhall in no wiſe believe,*

believe, though a man declare it to you. Acts xiii. 40. which words of St. Paul, and of the Prophets, as they are applied by him, ſeem plainly to intimate the approaching ruin of that people. *Apud Lucam Paulus optime hæc verba aptat ad excidium ſimile eventurum per Romanos.* Grotius ad *Habac.* i. 5. *Patet proprie de Chaldæis agi,* Habak. i. 5, 6. *Paulus tamen hoc opus paradoxum conſiderans tanquam cohærens cum aliis graviſſimis Dei judiciis, proceſſu temporis vulgandis in eandem gentem, --- id ad judicia et mala, quæ Judæos ſui temporis manebant, tranſtulit.* Vitringa ad *Jeſai.* x. 12. See him alſo on *Iſai.* xxviii. 21. and Hammond on *Acts* xiii. 40.

Theſe things amount to an evidence which cannot reaſonably be reſiſted:

—*ita res accendunt lumina rebus.*

The ancient Chriſtians ſaw it plainly, and inſiſted upon it ſtrongly [x], as upon a ſa tisfactory proof of the truth of Chriſtianity; and the proof is as evident now as it was then. It highly deſerves the ſerious conſideration of thoſe who doubt or diſbelieve. Whoſoever is of a ſtudious and inquiſitive diſpoſition, and not of a ſanguine complexion, has probably known what it is to doubt; and has perhaps been offended at certain writers, who are incapable of owning or of feeling a difficulty, and who convince none, except thoſe that ſtand in no need of conviction, and to ſome of whom it might be ſaid, *Urbem proditis, dum caſtella defenditis:* but here is a prophecy, and here is a completion, to which if we can make no reaſonable objection, we ought to admit

---

[x] Συγκρίνας δέ τις τὰς τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν λέξεις ταῖς λοιπαῖς τοῦ συγγραφέως ἱστορίαις ταῖς περὶ τοῦ παντὸς

πολέμου, πῶς οὐκ ἂν ἀποθαυμάσειεν θείαν ὡς ἀληθῶς καὶ ὑπερφυῶς παράδοξον τὴν πρόγνωσίν τε καὶ πρόρρησιν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ὁμολογήσας; *Quod ſi quis Servatoris noſtri verba cum iis comparet, quæ ab eodem ſcriptore de univerſo bello commemorata ſunt, fieri non poteſt quin admiretur præſcientiam ac prædictionem Servatoris noſtri, eamque vere divinam & ſupra modum ſtupendam eſſe fateatur.* Euſeb. *Hiſt. Eccl.* iii. 7.

mit the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, and to endeavour to know and to do his ſacred will, accounting this to be the beſt foundation of our preſent hopes, and of our future happineſs.

If the illuſtrious and moſt important prophecy which I have conſidered, and ſome others which ſhall be mentioned, have been evidently delivered, and evidently accompliſhed; and if the miracles of Chriſt and of his Apoſtles may be proved, as I ſhall endeavour to ſhew; it is a fair conſequence, that Chriſtianity is a true religion, and that it cannot be made falſe, or ambiguous, by any arguments drawn from the notions or from the behaviour of believers after the times of the Apoſtles.

Much may be ſaid, and ſomething ſhall be offered in behalf of the Fathers and Chriſtians of the three firſt centuries, who ſuffered ſo greatly for ſo good a cauſe, and whoſe abilities, if they are overvalued by ſome, are as much depreciated by others. No Chriſtian would willingly give them up in any point, where there is room to defend them: but the imperfections and miſtakes from which they were not free, (and who is free?) and their credulity in ſome things, and in ages which were not Critical, and a kind of credulity, to which an honeſt man, as ſuch, is more liable than a crafty impoſtor, can never invalidate the proofs internal and external of the truth of Chriſtianity.

The confirming and ſettling theſe great points, upon which our faith is founded, without a view to any particular ſyſtems and controverſies, as it is the moſt agreeable employment to an ingenuous mind, ſo is it uſually the moſt diſintereſted of all occupations. Whoſoever is reſolved to employ his hours and his labour in this manner, ſhould conſider himſelf as one who lays out his fortunes in mending the high-ways: Many are benefited, and few are obliged. If he eſcapes obloquy, it is very well:

---*Triumpho, ſi licet me latere tecto abſcedere.*

I have only this to add concerning the preſent ſubject, that Chriſt having ſaid of the city and temple, *one ſtone ſhall not be left upon another*, learned men have taken pains to ſhew that this was exactly and literally fulfilled, either under Veſpaſian, or under Adrian, or in the time of *Julian.*

If any one ſhould be of opinion that they have not proved this point, I deſire he would obſerve that the words are proverbial and figurative, and only denote utter ruin and deſolation, and would have been truly accompliſhed, though every ſingle ſtone had not been overturned; as a houſe or city is ſaid κατασκαφῆναι, when it is deſtroyed, though its foundations be not digged up.

Malachi, foretelling the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, ſays, *The day cometh that ſhall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly ſhall be ſtubble: and the day that cometh ſhall burn them up, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, that it ſhall leave them neither root nor branch,* iv. 1.

This was truly accompliſhed, though every unconverted Jew did not periſh in that general calamity. Proverbial ſayings are not mathematical axioms.

Euſebius, mentioning the prophecy of Micah, *Zion ſhall be plowed as a field.* iii. 12. ſays, Εἰ γοῦν τι δύναται καὶ ἡ ἡμετέρα ἱστορία, καθ' ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς τὴν πάλαι βοωμένην Σιὼν ζεύγεσι βοῶν ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων ἀνδρῶν ἀρουμένην ὀφθαλμοῖς παρειλήφαμεν, καὶ τήν γε Ἱερουσαλὴμ, ὡς αὐτό γέ φησι τὸ λόγιον, ὀπωροφυλακίου δίκην ἀπολειφθέντος, ἐν παντελεῖ καταστᾶσαν ἐρημίᾳ. *Quod ſi quidquam* noſtra *quoque* hiſtoria *valet, noſtris ipſorum temporibus, illam antiquitus celebratam Sion junctis bubus a Romanis viris arari, noſtris oculis inſpeximus, et ipſam Hieruſalem, quemadmodum ipſum hoc ait oraculum, inſtar pomorum cuſtodiæ deſertæ, ad extremam redactam ſolitudinem.* Dem. Evang. v. 273.

Euſebius was Biſhop of Cæſarea, and lived near enough to have frequent opportunities of viewing the ruins of Jeruſalem, and in them the completion of Chriſt's predictions.

The words ἡ ἡμετέρα ἱστορία mean, *the knowledge and the teſtimony of what we have ſeen ourſelves*; and the Latin tongue has no ſingle word, which exactly anſwers to this ſenſe of ἱστορία.

Herodotus begins his Book thus, Ἡροδότου Ἁλικαρνασσῆος ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἥδε. which James Gronovius tranſlates; *Herodoti Halicarnaſſenſis curæ demonſtratio hæc eſt.* But this interpretation ſtands in need of another. Kuſter thus explains the place; *Notandum eſt* ἱστορίην *non ſolum denotare hiſtoriam, ſive rerum geſtarum narrationem, vel deſcriptionem; ſed etiam, et quidem proprie, cognitionem rerum quas vel oculis ipſi luſtravimus, vel ex aliis ſciſcitando didicimus; vel ſtudium res varias, eo quo diximus, modo cognoſcendi. Et quoniam primi et antiquiſſimi Hiſtorici vix alias res memoriæ prodere poterant, quam quas vel ipſi vidiſſent, vel ex aliis ſciſcitati eſſent, hinc re-*

cte

ĕte et proprio ſenſu dicebantur ἱστορικοί. Poſtea vero latius, ut fieri ſolet, extenſâ vocis ejus ſignificatione, etiam quicumque alii rerum geſtarum ſcriptores eodem nomine ſimpliciter appellari cœperunt. Procœmium Hiſtoriæ Herodoteæ Latine ſic verterim: Rerum ab Herodoto Halicarnaſſenſi curioſe obſervatarum ſpecimen hoc eſt. *Vel per longiorem periphraſin:* Curioſitatis, quam Herodotus adhibuit, in rebus, quas narrat, vel luſtrandis, vel ſciſcitandis, ſpecimen, *vel* argumentum, hoc eſt.

Le Clerc thinks that *ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις* may be rendered: *Quod in hiſtoriâ præſtitit.* But, however, the obſervations of Kuſter upon the word *ἱστορίη* are juſt and true. See *Le Clerc*, Bibl. A. & M. V. 385. *Ἡροδότου ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἥδε, ὡς μήτε — Herodotus res a ſe obſervatas et inveſtigatas edidit, ut neque &c.*

I NOW proceed to make ſome remarks on prophecy in general, and then on the prophecies of the Old Teſtament relating to our Saviour.

That God foreknows even all the future actions of men, is what the holy Scriptures moſt evidently ſuppoſe and prove, and what the bulk of mankind in all ages have believed.

This opinion aroſe probably, not ſo much from arguments drawn from the Divine perfections, as from experience, tradition, and revelation.

It appears in ſacred hiſtory, that God almighty from the moſt ancient times revealed himſelf to men by foretelling future events, which is prophecy.

The uſes of prophecy, beſides gradually opening and unfolding the things relating to the Meſſias, and the bleſſings which by him ſhould be conferred upon mankind, are many, and great, and manifeſt.

1. It ſerved to ſecure the belief of a God and of a providence.

As God is inviſible and ſpiritual, there was cauſe to fear that in the firſt and ruder ages of the world, when men were buſier in cultivating the earth than in cultivating arts and ſciences, and in ſeeking the neceſſaries of life, than in the ſtudy of morality, they might forget their creator and governor; and therefore God maintained amongſt them the great article of faith in him, by manifeſtations of himſelf; by ſending angels to declare his will; by miracles, and by prophecies. Theſe were barriers againſt Atheiſm.

2. It was intended to give men the profoundeſt veneration for that amazing knowledge from which nothing was concealed, not even the future actions of creatures, and the things which as yet were not. How could a man hope to hide any counſel, any deſign, or thought from ſuch a being?

3. It contributed to keep up devotion and true religion, the religion of the heart, which conſiſts partly in entertaining juſt and honourable notions of God and of his perfections, and which is a more rational and a more acceptable ſervice than rites and ceremonies.

4. It excited men to rely upon God, and to love him, who condeſcended to hold this mutual intercourſe with his creatures, and to permit them to conſult him, as one friend aſks advice of another.

5. It was intended to keep the people, to whom God revealed himſelf, from idolatry, a ſin to which the Jews would be inclined, both from the diſpoſition to it which they had acquired in Ægypt, and from the contagion of bad example.

The people of Iſrael were ſtrictly forbidden to conſult the diviners, and the Gods of other nations, and to uſe any enchantments and wicked arts; and that they might have no temptation to it, God permitted them to apply to him and to his prophets, even upon ſmall occaſions; and he raiſed up amongſt them a ſucceſſion of prophets, to whom they might have reſort for advice and direction. Theſe prophets were reverenced abroad, as well as at home, and conſulted by foreign Princes, and in the times of the captivity they were honoured by great Kings, and advanced to high ſtations.

Man has a ſtrong deſire to look forward, and to know things to come. This deſire, if it be diſcretely governed, is natural and innocent, and there are ſeveral things which it would be of great temporal benefit and advantage to foreſee. For example:

Man would be glad to know how he may ſhun a future evil.

Thus, Noah was warned to build an ark, in which he and his family ſhould be ſaved from the flood: thus Lot was commanded to fly from Sodom, with his wife and daughters: thus David was told to eſcape from a ſtrong hold where he dwelt, and afterwards from Keilah: thus in the Pagan world, Socrates, as his diſciples Plato and Xenophon affirm, had a Dæmon, or good Genius, who never exhorted him to any thing, but diſſuaded him from ſuch things as would prove hurtful, by which ſecret warning he is ſaid often to have preſerved himſelf and his friends, and to have given them advice, which if they followed not, they conſtantly found cauſe to repent.

See a Diſſertation of Olearius in Stanley's *Hiſtoria Philoſophiæ*, and Le Clerc *Bibl. Choiſ.* xxii. p. 426. xxiii. p. 226. and *Silv. Philol.* c. iii. Olearius and Le Clerc believed that Socrates had ſuch a Dæmon, and I confeſs myſelf ſo far a fanatic, as to incline to the ſame opinion, but without blaming thoſe who are of another mind. When Socrates, juſt before he expired, ordered his friend to offer up a cock to Æſculapius, it is poſſible that he was delirious, through the poiſon which he had taken, as a learned and ingenious phyſician obſerved to me.

Scribonius Largus ſays, *Cicutam ergo potam caligo, mentiſque alienatio, & artuum gelatio inſequitur : ultimoque præſocantur, qui eam ſumſerunt, nihilque ſentiunt.* Compoſ. 179.

To this head belong ſundry prophecies containing a double fate, if you will permit the expreſſion, which ſhould be accompliſhed according as men would act. Thus Jeremiah told the kings and the people of Judah, that if they would repent, they ſhould be proſperous; if not, they ſhould be deſtroyed: and to Zedekiah he privately declared; *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, If thou wilt aſſuredly go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then thy ſoul ſhall live, and this city ſhall not be burnt with fire, and thou ſhalt live, and thy houſe. But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then ſhall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they ſhall burn it with fire, and thou ſhalt not eſcape out of their hand. Obey, I beſeech thee, the voice of the Lord which I ſpeak unto thee: ſo ſhall it be well with thee, and thy ſoul ſhall live.*

Thus Achilles in Homer is repreſented as having a twofold conditional event declared to him; if he returned home, he was to prolong his days, but to live and die in obſcurity; if he continued in the army, he was to be cut off in the flower of his youth, but to obtain everlaſting honour; upon which he preferred glory to length of life.

Μήτηρ γάρ τέ με φησὶ θεὰ, Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα,
Διχθαδίας κῆρας φερέμεν θανάτοιο τέλοσδε·
Εἰ μέν κ' αὖθι μένων Τρώων πόλιν ἀμφιμάχωμαι,
Ὤλετο μέν μοι νόστος, ἀτὰρ κλέος ἄφθιτον ἔσται·
Εἰ δέ κεν οἴκαδ' ἵκοιμι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
Ὤλετό μοι κλέος ἐσθλὸν, ἐπὶ δηρὸν δέ μοι αἰὼν
Ἔσσεται, οὐδέ κέ μ' ὦκα τέλος θανάτοιο κιχείη.
Il. I. 410.

The ſame poet tells us that Polyïdus, a diviner, aſſured his ſon Euchenor, that, if he ſtayed at home, he ſhould fall ſick and die, and if he went to Troy, he ſhould be ſlain in battle: upon which the youth choſe the latter fate.

Ἦν δέ τις Εὐχήνωρ, Πολυΐδου μάντιος υἱὸς,
Ὅς ῥ' εὖ εἰδὼς κῆρ' ὀλοὴν, ἐπὶ νηὸς ἔβαινε·
Πολλάκι γάρ οἱ ἔειπε γέρων ἀγαθὸς Πολύϊδος,
Νούσῳ ὑπ' ἀργαλέῃ φθίσθαι οἷς ἐν μεγάροισιν,
Ἢ μετ' Ἀχαιῶν νηυσὶν ὑπὸ Τρώεσσι δαμῆναι.
Il. N. 663.

Thus the Pagans had the ſame notion with that which is mentioned in Scripture, of a double deſtiny depending upon human choice.

Again. Man would be glad to know that he ſhall obtain a future good.

Hope is one of the greateſt comforts that poor mortals have in this world; but a certain foreſight of proſperity produces a more ſolid joy, and a firmer ſupport.

God made ſome favourable predictions to Noah.

He promiſed a multitude of bleſſings to Abraham, relating to him, to his family, and to his poſterity.

When Hagar was driven from her home, ſhe and her ſon, and caſt out into the wide world, an Angel comforted her, and aſſured her that her ſon ſhould be the father of a great nation.

God repeated the ſame promiſes to Iſaac which he had made to Abraham.

He revealed himſelf to Jacob, when he was forced to fly from his father's houſe, and gave him aſſurances of ſupport and protection.

He foretold to *Moſes*, that by him he would deliver the people of Iſrael, and to Joſhua, that he ſhould be victorious in all his wars, and to David that he ſhould be king of Iſrael, and that the kingdom ſhould continue in his family.

Jeremiah comforted Baruch in his affliction with this prophecy, *Thus ſaith the Lord, I will bring evil on all fleſh, but thy life will I give thee for a prey in all places whither thou goeſt.* xlv. 5.

He himſelf, who was a man of ſorrows, and lived in calamitous times, received this conſolation from God, *I am with thee, to ſave thee and to deliver thee.*

He alſo received an order from God to ſay to Ebedmelech the Æthiopian, *I will bring evil upon this city, but I will deliver thee in that day, ſaith the Lord, and thou* *ſhalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid: for I will ſurely deliver thee, and thou ſhalt not fall by the ſword, but thy life ſhall be for a prey unto thee, becauſe thou haſt put thy truſt in me, ſaith the Lord.*

In the New Teſtament we find that St. Paul, on ſome occaſions, had a promiſe of deliverance out of the hands of his enemies. Our Saviour propheſied evil, that is, temporal evil, to all his diſciples, and told them that they ſhould be exerciſed with ſufferings and affiictions; but to compenſate this, he promiſed them in the preſent world peace of mind, and joy in the holy Spirit, and the Divine aſſiſtance, and in the world to come eternal happineſs.

It muſt have been a great ſatisfaction to the illuſtrious perſons whom we have mentioned, and to others recorded in ſacred Hiſtory, that they were ſecure of the Divine favour and protection. This muſt have given them courage and conſtancy under all the difficulties of life, and have enabled them to look danger and diſtreſs in the face. The Greek poet deſcribing Ulyſſes as an example of prudence, patience, reſolution, and preſence of mind under a variety of trials, ſuppoſes that he had not only the aſſiſtance of Pallas, but a prediction from Tireſias, that he ſhould at laſt return home, and ſubdue his domeſtic enemies, and reign happy over his happy ſubjects, and come to a good old age. *Odyſſ.* Λ. 90.

To receive predictions of future unavoidable evils would be a curſe rather than a bleſſing, and in the Scriptures when ſuch predictions are delivered, it is by way of puniſhment. Thus God foretold to Eli all the evil which he would bring upon his family, and the Prophets denounced upon ſome occaſions the calamities which ſhould befal ſome wicked people, and the untimely death which they ſhould not eſcape.

To know future bleſſings of which we ſhall partake, and to receive an admonition how we may avoid an impending evil, are favours which men would often be glad to receive; and theſe favours were granted to the people of God in ancient times and ruder ages, for ſeveral reaſons which we have enumerated; but when by his Son he had introduced a purer and ſublimer religion, he no longer continued, under the Evangelical diſpenſation, to inform men of ſuch temporal events. It is enough for a Chriſtian to know that he may ſecure to himſelf everlaſting happineſs by his obedience. As the great things relating to the next ſtate were more clearly revealed, the ſmaller things relating to this world, and to its frivolous concerns, were ſhut up in obſcurity.

The knowledge of the things which will befal us, and our parents, and children, and friends, how long we and they ſhall live, and when and how we ſhall die, are ſecrets which God has concealed from us, and which in wiſdom and kindneſs he has concealed from us. Sometimes proſperous events come moſt agreeable when they are leaſt expected, and it would be a ſad thing to anticipate all our griefs, and to be miſerable before hand.

And yet ſuch has been the diſpoſition of men in almoſt all ages, that many have had an intemperate deſire of this knowledge, which gave riſe and encouragement to wicked arts and to vile impoſtures. Hiſtory both ancient and modern informs us of this, and affords us ſeveral examples of Princes, Stateſmen, Politicians, who have had little or no religion, who have been mere Atheiſts both in principles and in practice, as Tiberius, the Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin, and others, who yet were very credulous in this way, with all their free-thinking, and gave great heed to divination, and to predictions made by pretenders to thoſe arts; ſo that irreligion and ſuperſtition are not at all inconſiſtent, and he who believes no God, may believe in evil Spirits, or unknown powers, or fatal influences of the heavenly bodies. Pliny the elder, who had atheiſtical notions, yet ſays of earthquakes, that the miſchief which they portend is as great as that which they cauſe, if not greater, and that the city of Rome was never ſhaken with one, which did not forebode future evil. *Nec vero ſimplex malum, aut in ipſo tantum motu periculum eſt; ſed par aut majus oſtento. Nunquam urbs Roma tremuit, ut non futuri eventus alicujus id prænuncium eſſet.* L. II. lxxxvi. p. 113.

Il n'y a rien de ſi commun, que de voir les Incredules entêtez de l'Aſtrologie Judiciaire, et perſuadez que les Magiciens ſont des choſes qui ſont au deſſus de l'ordre de la nature. Par exemple, on accuſe deux grands Miniſtres d'Etat, dont les actions ne nous laiſſent pas croire que la foi en Dieu fût une de leurs plus grandes vertus, d'avoir crû tous deux les predictions des Aſtrologues; et l'un d'eux, de s'être perſuadé qu'un homme qui vomiſſoit diverſes liqueurs, le faiſoit par le moyen de la Magie. "Le Cardinal de "Richelieu," dit Vittorio Siri, Mem. Rec. T. viii. *p.* 669. "*conſultoit outre l'Aſtro- "logie, toute ſorte de divinations, juſqu'à "des femelettes; dont la ſcience conſiſte en "des vapeurs de Mere, qui leur font pré- "dire*

“ *dire par hazard quelque évenement fortuit. Il étoit ſi credule qu'il attribuoit à l'operation du Démon l'art de jetter par la bouche toutes ſortes de liqueurs, après avoir bû de l'eau, comme le faiſoit un Charlatan Italien. Mazarin n'étant pas encore Cardinal, ayant éclatté de rire à un diſcours ſi ſimple, penſa perdre ſa faveur par là ; et le Cardinal irrité de cet éclat de rire, par lequel il jugea que Mazarin ſe moquoit de lui, lui dit ironiquement, qu'il n'étoit pas Monſieur Mazarin qui avoit une profonde étude et une exacte connoiſſance de tout. Mazarin repliqua tout ſoumis, qu'en donnant cinquante piſtoles, que le Charlatan demandoit pour enſeigner ſon ſecret, on verroit ſi l'operation du Démon s'en mêloit. Mazarin regardoit toutes les divinations, comme des ſottiſes, excepté l'Aſtrologie, dont il étoit fort entêté, quoiqu'il feignît le contraire. Lorſque Madame Mancini ſa ſœur mourut, et enſuite la Ducheſſe de Mercœur ſa Niece, comme il eut vû par-là accomplie la prediction, qu'un Aſtrologue en avoit faite à Rome par*

“ *ecrit*

" *écrit longtems auparavant, il en devint*
" *extraordinairement triſte et mélancholique; non par tendreſſe pour ſes parens,*
" *mais parceque ce même Aſtrologue avoit*
" *fixé le tems de ſa mort à un terme qui*
" *s'approchoit. Il en perdit l'appetit, et*
" *demeura pluſieurs nuits ſans dormir.*

On ſait auſſi que l'Empereur Julien, qui n'avoit pû ajouter foi aux propheſies de l'Ancien et du Nouveau Teſtament, étoit exceſſivement addonné aux augures, et aux préſages que l'on tiroit des entrailles des victimes, et les Payens mêmes l'en ont repris. Voiez Ammien Marcellin. L. xxv. *c.* 5.

Je poſe en fait que ces ſortes de choſes ſont auſſi difficiles à croire, ſi on les conſidere en elles-mêmes, que les myſteres et les miracles de la Religion Chrétienne. Mais les Incredules y ajoûtent foi, pendant qu'ils refuſent de croire à l'Evangile; parce que ces ſortes d'opinions n'ont aucun rapport avec la conduite de la vie, et ne ſont nullement incompatibles, comme la Morale Chrétienne, avec leurs mauvaiſes habitudes. Le Clerc *De L'Incredulité. Part.* I. *ch.* i. *p.* 32.

It is a queſtion of importance, whether there has ever been in the Pagan world ſuch a thing as *Divination*, or a foreknowledge of things. The ſtrongeſt argument againſt it is contained in Iſaiah (*ch.* xli.) where almighty God foretelling many great events, particularly the raiſing up of Cyrus to deſtroy the Babylonian Monarchy, and to deliver the Jews from captivity, declares that he alone can diſcover ſuch things, and appeals to theſe predictions, as to proofs of his divinity, and evident arguments that there is no God beſides him. *Produce your cauſe, ſaith the Lord, bring forth your ſtrong reaſons, ſaith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and ſhew us what ſhall happen: let them ſhew the former things what they be, that we may conſider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be diſmayed and behold it together. Behold ye are of nothing* &c. And again: *I have*

I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I ſhewed them, I did them ſuddenly, and they came to paſs. Becauſe I knew that thou art obſtinate, and thy neck is an iron ſinew, and thy brow braſs: I have even from the beginning declared it to thee: before it came to paſs I ſhewed it thee; leſt thou ſhouldſt ſay, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image hath commanded them, &c. xlvii. And more to the ſame purpoſe.

Hence it has been concluded that there never was ſuch a thing as fore-knowledge in the Pagan world, a concluſion too large and abſolute to be inferred from the premiſſes.

Hinc poſſunt egregie confutari, qui putant frequentiſſime apud Ethnicos *futura a Cacodæmonibus prænunciata; quod hic a nemine, niſi a ſe, fieri poſſe ſtatuat Deus. Pleraque omnia illa oracula, quæ leguntur apud veteres Græcos, aut numquam ſunt edita, aut ab hominibus pronunciata, ut viri docti ſatis oſtenderunt, et præſertim vir*

vir eruditus Antonius Van Dale. Sæpius hic repetitur provocatio Dei, ne leviter res prætereat, ſed altius in animum deſcendat, præſertim idololatrarum Judæorum. — Imo vero, dixiſſent Græci, multa habemus oracula — Sed Propheta repoſuiſſet meras fraudes fuiſſe hominum, qui aut ambiguis reſponſis conſultores eludebant, vel conjecturâ de rebus futuris temere judicabant, quam poſtea arguebat eventus. Si certe credidiſſet Cacodæmones ipſos fudiſſe oracula, aliter plane locutus eſſet, cum ſciret homines ab ejuſmodi malis ſpiritibus non difficulter potuiſſe falli, nec plebeculam eorum reſponſa a reſponſis ipſius Dei ſatis poſſe ſecernere.— Non ita loquerentur qui fidem habent hiſtoriis Ethnicorum de oſtentis et prodigiis, quæ potentiâ Cacodæmonum vere contigiſſe volunt; ex eorum enim ſententiâ magna et memorabilia fuiſſent malorum ſpirituum per totum terrarum orbem opera. Sed Prophetæ longe malumus credere, quam ejuſmodi hominibus.—Clericus *ad* Iſaiam. To whoſe remarks we might add, that the Scriptures, though they ſeem in many places to allow that evil Spirits may work miracles, yet

no where ſuppoſe or intimate that they can predict the future actions of men, except perhaps in *Acts* xvi. 16. and there it is not neceſſary that ſuch prophecy ſhould be meant. In *Deut.* xiii. it is ſaid: *If there ariſe amongſt you a prophet, and giveth thee a ſign or a wonder, — ſaying, Let us go after other Gods, — that prophet ſhall be put to death.* But this ſeems not ſo much intended to declare that ſuch falſe prophets ſhould be able to ſhew ſigns and work miracles, as to ſecure the people againſt idolatry; and therefore God ſays, If a man endeavours to ſeduce you to idolatry, put him to death, even though he ſhould give you ſigns and wonders. Beſides, the ſign, whether real or pretended, might be rather of the miraculous than of the prophetic kind, and it could not be the prediction of a remote event, becauſe that would not ſerve an Impoſtor's purpoſe. The ſame remark may be applied to the *falſe Prophets* in *Matt.* xxiv. μάγοι, and γόητες, who ſhould ſhew ſigns and wonders, but whoſe predictions and promiſes ſhould be confuted by the event.

Prophecies, in one reſpect, ſeem to carry with them ſurer marks of proceeding from God than miracles: for ſpirits, good or evil, may by their own natural ſtrength, and without God's immediate aſſiſtance, perform things ſurpaſſing human abilities (which to men are miracles) unleſs God reſtrain them; but it ſeems altogether beyond the power of a created, finite, limited being to look into futurity, and to foreſee the actions and behaviour of free agents, who as yet are unborn; this is an act, which probably implies a power equal to creation and preſervation, and to upholding the univerſal ſyſtem, and therefore prophecy muſt be the gift of God; and an Angel or an evil Dæmon, if he foretells ſuch remote events, muſt be inſpired himſelf, or muſt get his knowledge from divine prophecies; or elſe what he delivers muſt be by a conjectural ſkill, in which he may perhaps ſometimes, in ſome general things, aim right, and be able to form a better gueſs and judgment than mortal men, having larger views and longer experience. If he ſhould have ſkill to foretell inclement ſeaſons, droughts, tempeſts, inundations, peſtilences, earthquakes, famines, fertility of the earth, plentiful harveſts, *&c.* yet to know what good and evil ſhall befall the unborn grandchildren of *Caius* and *Titius*, how they ſhall behave themſelves, and how they ſhall ſpend their days, lies in all probability far beyond the ſagacity of any creature.

In the book of *Tobit*, the Angel Raphael ſays to Tobias, *Fear not, for ſhe* [Sarah] *is appointed unto thee from the beginning, and thou ſhalt preſerve her, and ſhe ſhall go with thee: moreover I* ſuppoſe *that ſhe ſhall bear thee children.* vi. 17. Here is an Angel's conjecture, which was fulfilled, as the writer takes care to inform us, xiv. 12.

Whoſoever he was who wrote the Hiſtory of Tobit, his deſign ſeems to have been to draw the character of a pious and worthy man, who on account of his piety fell into great diſtreſs, and who after having

ing borne many calamities with reſignation and conſtancy, was reſtored to proſperity, and led a long and happy life. He had a wife, pious and virtuous like himſelf, but once or twice a little too querulous, and a ſon, who was an amiable youth, and a dutiful child to his parents. Angels[a] good and evil are introduced, with a ſufficient quantity of the[b] marvellous. The name itſelf of *Tobit* ſeems to be feigned, for *Tôb* in Hebrew means *bonus.* There are alſo other feigned names in this Drama, concerning which ſee *Grotius.* Laſtly, both the heroes of the ſtory are very long-lived; the father lived 158, and the ſon 127 years. All this has the air of a pious fiction, and the Author ſeems to have propoſed to himſelf to imitate the book of *Job.*

---

[a] The Jews believed ſeven principal Angels. *Zech.* iv. 10. *Revel.* i. 4. v. 6. viii. 2. One may ſuppoſe, from the number, that they were thought to preſide over the Planets. *Tobit.* xii. 15.

[b] Les Juifs ont debité un ſi grand nombre de fables, que leur hiſtoire, depuis le tems des derniers des Hiſtoriens ſacrez, n'eſt guere plus raiſonable que les plus fabuleuſes hiſtoires du Paganiſme. Au moins il eſt certain qu'étant mieux inſtruits que les Payens, ils ſont beaucoup plus blâmables d'avoir inventé tant de menſonges. *Le Clerc.* Bibl. Choiſ. iii. 166.

Virgil makes the Harpy ſay, *Æn.* iii. 251.

Quæ Phœbo Pater omnipotens, mihi
Phœbus Apollo
Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima
pando.

Where Servius remarks, *Notandum Apollinem, quæ dicit, ab Jove cognoſcere.* Æſchylus Ἱερ.

——ταῦτα γὰρ πατὴρ
Ζεὺς ἐγκαθίει Λοξίᾳ θεσπίσματα.
——*hæc namque pater*
Jupiter immittit Apollini oracula.

And:

Πατρὸς προφήτης ἐστὶ Λοξίας Διός.

Apollo patris Jovis eſt propheta.

Apollo, ſays *Suidas,* is *Jupiter's* prophet, and delivers to men the oracles which he receives from him. ὁ Ἀπόλλων ὑποφήτης ἐστὶ τοῦ πατρὸς, καὶ παρ' ἐκείνου λαμβάνει τὰς μαντείας, καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκφέρει.

In the *Hymn* to *Apollo*, the god ſays concerning himſelf, 132.

> *Χρήσω τ' ἀνθρώποισι Διὸς νημερτέα βουλήν.*
>
> *Oraculoque edam hominibus Jovis verum conſilium.*

And in our learned Poet, the Almighty is introduced ſaying to the Archangel Michael,

> ——*reveal*
> *To Adam what ſhall come in future days,*
> *As I ſhall thee enlighten.*

To prophecy is to be adjoined a knowledge of the ſecret intentions of men. It ſeems to be beyond the abilities of any created being to know the thoughts of a man, particularly of a man who is agitated by no paſſion, and gives no indications of his mind by any outward ſign. This is aſcribed to God, as his peculiar perfection, in many places of Scripture, and it is ſaid, that he is *a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, *and underſtandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts*, &c. This knowledge God often imparted to the Prophets.

Cicero has treated the ſubject of *Divination* in two Books: in the firſt he alledges all that can be ſaid for it, and in the ſecond he argues againſt it. Whoſoever will examine his reaſons on both ſides, may ſee, I think, that he has not overſet all the proofs which he has offered for it. He obſerves, that all nations, civil and barbarous, always agreed in this, that there was ſuch a thing as divination, or a foreknowledge of events, to be obtained by various indications, as by the ſtars, by portents and prodigies, by the entrails of victims, by omens, by lots, by forebodings, by conſulting the dead, by oracles, by inſpired perſons, by dreams, *&c.*

If there is ſuch a thing as divination, ſaid the Pagans, there muſt be a Deity from whom it proceeds, becauſe man by his own natural powers cannot diſcover things to come; and if there be a Deity, there is probably divination, ſince it is not a conduct unworthy of the Deity to take notice of mortal men, and of their affairs, and on ſome occaſions to adviſe and inſtruct them. Thus the Pagans argued; and accordingly, for the moſt part, they who believed a God and a providence, believed divination, they who were atheiſts, denied it, and they who were ſceptics decided nothing about it.

Divination was a matter of fact, and to be proved like other facts, by evidence, teſtimony, and experience: and ſome philoſophers rejecting all other kinds of divination, as dubious and fallacious, admitted two ſorts, that by inſpired perſons, and that by dreams. In favour of the latter we have the authorities of Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, and Ariſtotle. Cicero *de Divin.* i. 25.

Atque dormientium animi maxime declarant divinitatem ſuam. Multa enim, cum remiſſi et liberi ſunt, futura proſpiciunt, &c. Cicero *de Seneƈt.* 22. which is taken from Xenophon.

When Socrates was in priſon, Crito went to pay him an early viſit, and told him, he was informed by perſons come from ſea, that the ſhip from Delos would return to Athens that day, the conſequence of which was, that Socrates would be put to death on the morrow. Be it ſo, ſaid Socrates, if it pleaſe the Gods: yet I think the ſhip will not be here to day, but to morrow. *Why ſo, dear friend?* Becauſe this night a woman of a beautiful and majeſtic form, cloathed in a white robe, appeared to me in a dream, and calling me by my name, ſaid,

Ηματί κεν τριτάτῳ Φθίην ἐρίβωλον ἵκοιο.

The third day ſhall land thee ſafe at
fruitful Phthia.

They are the words of Achilles in Homer, when he propoſed to return home. Socrates took it for a prediction of his death, becauſe he judged that to die was to go home to his own country. And his dream was accompliſhed. Plato's *Crito.*

See Le Clerc on *Gen.* xii. 7. concerning revelations by dreams. Joſephus has recorded a remarkable dream of Glaphyra, *Antiq.* xvii. 12. and *Bell. Jud.* ii. 7. But Noris, in his *Cenotaph. Piſ.* and Le Clerc *Bibl. Choiſ.* iv. 60. obſerve that it cannot be true, that Archelaus married the widow of Juba; whence it follows, that this dream of Glaphyra, ſuppoſed to be widow of Juba, and wife of Archelaus, is either entirely, or partly falſe.

He who would ſee ſome modern accounts of dreams and prophecies, may conſult Grotius, *Epiſt.* 405. *Part* ii. or Le Clerc *Bibl. Univ.* T. i. p. 152. and La Mothe le Vayer, *Problemes Sceptiques* xxviii. and the life of Uſher by Parr, and the viſions of a ſtrange fellow called Rice Evans, and Bayle's Dict. *Majus*, not. [D.] *Maldonat*, not. [G.] where he ſays of prophetic dreams, *De tels faits, dont l'univers eſt tout plein, embarraſſent plus les Eſprits forts qu'ils ne le témoignent.*

As the Reader may not have the books to which I have referred, it may ſave him ſome trouble, and give him ſome ſatisfaction, or amuſement, to peruſe what follows:

Quidam ad Landreſium, in operibus, proximè oppidum cubans, ſomnio monitus ut cuniculum hoſtis caveret, ſurrexit. Vix egreſſus erat, prorumpit vis tecta, locumque disjicit. At Salmaſium ſi videris, hiſtoriam tibi referet, patre ſuo auctore. Ad eum venit quidam Græcæ linguæ plane ignarus. Is in ſomnio voces Græcas has audierat; ἄπιθι· οὐκ ὀσφραίνῃ τὴν σὴν ἀψυχίαν; *experrectuſque Gallicis literis ſonum earum vocum perſcripſerat. Cum ejus nihil intelligeret, rogatus Senator Salmaſius ei verba interpretatur, eſt enim filii doctiſſimi doctus pater. Migrat homo ex ædibus. Eæ nocte ſequente corruunt. Hoc his adjice quæ Cicero, Tertullianus, aliique ex omnium gentium hiſtoriis de ſomniis collegere.* καὶ γάρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν, *interdum, contra quàm cenſent Peripatetici.* Grotius, p. 870.

Le Clerc, where he gives an account of this paſſage, tells us, that Salmaſius the father was *Conſeiller au Parlement de Dijon.*

La Mothe le Vayer ſeems to relate the ſame ſtory that Grotius had from Salmaſius, but with ſome difference. *Un Conſeiller du Parlement de Dijon nommé Carré, ouït en dormant qu'on lui diſoit ces mots Grecs, qu'il n'entendoit nullement,* ἄπιθι, οὐκ αἰσθάνῃ τὴν σοῦ ἀτυχίαν. *Ils luy furent interpretez,* abi, non ſentis infortunium tuum; *et comme la maiſon qu'il habitoit menaçoit de ruine, il la quitta fort à propos, pour éviter ſa cheute qui arriva auſſi-tôt aprés.* La Mothe probably took his account from common rumour, when the ſtory had undergone ſome alteration in paſſing from one to another. Ἀτυχίαν would be a more eligible word than ἀψυχίαν, if we were at liberty to chuſe; but we muſt take it as Salmaſius gives it, and not alter the language of *Monſieur Le Songe.*

As to the oracles which were uttered in Pagan temples, if we conſider how many motives both of private gain and of national politics might have contributed to ſupport them, and what many of the Pagans have ſaid againſt them, and what obſcure and ſhuffling anſwers they commonly contained, and into what ſcorn and neglect they fell at laſt, we muſt needs have a contemptible opinion of them in general; we cannot fix upon any oracles on which we can depend, as upon prophecies which were pronounced and fulfilled; and if there were any ſuch, which on the other hand we cannot abſolutely deny and diſprove, they are irretrievably loſt and buried under the rubbiſh of the falſe, ambiguous, and trifling Reſponſes, which Hiſtory has preſerved; and thoſe which have a plauſible appearance, lie under the ſuſpicion of having been compoſed after the event. Some of them were in ſuch doggrel verſe, that they caſt a grievous reproach upon the God of poetry, from whom they were ſuppoſed to proceed, and betrayed the poor capacity of the laureate poet.

In the claſs of knaves and lyars muſt be placed the generality of ſoothſayers, magicians, and they who made a craft and a livelihood of predicting, and drew up the art into a ſyſtem.

Setting aſide theſe ſorts of divination, as extremely ſuſpicious, there remain predictions by dreams, and by ſudden impulſes upon perſons who were not of the fraternity of impoſtors; theſe were allowed to be ſometimes preternatural by many of the learned Pagans, and cannot, I think, be diſproved, and ſhould not be totally rejected.

If it be aſked whether theſe dreams and impulſes were cauſed by the immediate inſpiration of God, or by the mediation of good or of evil ſpirits, we muſt confeſs our own ignorance and incapacity to reſolve the queſtion.

There is a hiſtory in the Acts of the Apoſtles which ſeems to determine the point in favour of divination. *A certain damſel*, ſays St. Luke, *poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of divination, met us, which brought her maſters much gain by ſoothſaying: the ſame followed Paul and us, and cried, ſaying, Theſe men are the ſervants of* *of the moſt high God, which ſhew unto us the way of ſalvation. And this ſhe did many days; but Paul being grieved, turned and ſaid to the ſpirit, I command thee in the name of Jeſus Chriſt to come out of her. And he came out the ſame hour.*

Thus the divine Providence ſo ordered it that this occurrence ſhould turn greatly to the honour and advancement of Chriſtianity. But this propheteſs might be in repute for diſcovering loſt or ſtolen goods, or for revealing what happened in diſtant places, or for predicting changes of weather, or for many things of a like nature, and might not be able to foretell the future actions of men.

As to Iſaias, we may infer, with Vitringa, from his words, that God was determined ſo to conduct the great revolutions which were to be brought about in the world, and ſo to order the things relating to the victories of Cyrus, and to the fall of Babylon, that his predictions ſhould be accompliſhed, and that the Chaldæans and other Pagan prophets ſhould be filled with the ſpirit of error and of ignorance. *I am the Lord — that fruſtrateth the tokens of liars, and maketh diviners mad.* And again he declares that the idols of Babylon ſhould be deſtroyed, and their falſe Gods not able to defend themſelves. So that the declarations in Iſaiah may be ſuppoſed to relate to the predictions made by Iſaiah, and by other prophets, in which their ſuperiority over the diviners ſhould manifeſtly appear, to the confuſion of their Pagan neighbours. This, I ſay, follows, but not that, where there was no competition between the God of Iſrael, and the Pagan Deities, no ſuch thing as divination ſhould ever be found in any age, and in any part of the Gentile world.

It may be ſaid that, in all probability, God will not endue bad Angels with the ſpirit of prophecy, or permit them to reveal things to come. It is probable indeed he will never do it, where there is a competition between true religion and idolatry, and when it would make men worſe than they would elſe be. But it appears from the Scriptures, that the prophetic *afflatus* has ſometimes inſpired bad men ; and we cannot be certain that God may not bring about ſome of the deſigns of providence even by evil ſpirits, by unworthy creatures, and immoral agents : much leſs can we be certain that good Angels were never employed, as miniſtring Spirits, among the Pagans.

Milton treats this ſubject in his *Paradiſe Regained*, i. 446, and makes Chriſt ſay to Satan ;

> --- *Whence haſt thou then thy truth,*
> *But from him* [God] *or his Angels Preſident*
> *In every province, who themſelves diſdaining*
> *T'approach thy temples, give thee in command*
> *What to the ſmalleſt tittle thou ſhalt ſay*
> *To thy adorers ?*

It may be ſaid alſo that Divination among the Pagans helped, indirectly at leaſt, to ſupport Idolatry and Paganiſm. Socrates, and Plato, and Xenophon, and other worthy men believed divination by dreams and impulſes; and this opinion had a tendency to confirm them in their religion, that is, in the belief of a ſupreme God, and of inferior Gods, and good Dæmons. It may be ſo; but the Divine Providence ſeems hitherto never to have intended that Judaiſm, or afterwards Chriſtianity, ſhould be the religion of all mankind, ſince neither of theſe religions were ever fairly propoſed to all mankind. Divination, or the opinion of it, contributed to keep up Paganiſm in Pagan nations; it contributed alſo to keep out Atheiſm; and there is a ſort of Paganiſm which, ſuch as it is, is far better than Atheiſm, with Bayle's leave be it ſaid, who was pleaſed to affirm the contrary, and who, whatſoever was his deſign, has highly obliged all Atheiſts and Infidels by many arguments and remarks ſcattered up and down in his writings. Bayle was not the inventor of this hypotheſis, though he adorned and improved it. Lucretius and other *Eſprits Forts* had maintained it:

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona.

Lucretius i. 81.

Illud in his rebus vereor, ne forte rearis
Impia te rationis inire elementa, viamque
Endogredi ſceleris: quod contra ſæpius olim
Relligio peperit ſceleroſa atque impia facta.

There may have been modes of Idolatry which were worſe than Atheiſm, and which indeed, ſtrictly ſpeaking, were a kind of Atheiſm, as Bayle and others have truly obſerved; there may have been Atheiſts in the Pagan world who were better citizens and honeſter people than many of their ſuperſtitious country-men; and ſome Epicureans, as to perſonal qualities, might be preferable to ſome Peripatetics and Stoics; Atheiſm in idolatrous nations and in former ages was not altogether ſo great a depravity as it is now, ſince natural Religion has received ſo much friendly aid from natural Philoſophy, and from the excellent Newtonian Syſtem, and has been ſo well illuſtrated and confirmed by many ſkilful Writers; Deiſm likewiſe is not ſo bad in places where Chriſtianity is clouded and defaced by Superſtition, as it is in countries where Revealed Religion is free from ſuch groſs errors and defects. There have been ſeveral Idolaters, Jews, Mahometans, and Chriſtians, ſeveral Reverend Inquiſitors, *Compellers to come in*, Propagators of the Faith by ſword, halter, and faggot, who have been viler perſons than ſeveral Atheiſts; and religion may be corrupted to ſuch a degree, as to be worſe than unbelief: but if a man will needs draw the compariſon between Atheiſm and Idolatry, it is not fair to take the worſt kind of ſuperſtition, and the moſt ignorant, flagitious and infamous Pagans who were infected with it, and oppoſe to them the better ſort of Atheiſts, ancient and modern, who lived reputably, and tell us that Epicurus, and Caſſius, and Atticus, and Pliny, and Spinoza were more to be eſteemed than many believing Pagans, or perhaps Chriſtians.

We muſt conſider Paganiſm in the whole, as it has been from the time when it began, to this day, in all ages, and in all places; and the queſtion is whether if all theſe Pagans had been Atheiſts, it had been better for civil ſociety in general, or no. On this queſtion moſt of thoſe who are not Atheiſts, I preſume, will chuſe the negative; and of the Atheiſts, all will not take the affirmative, for there have been Atheiſts, who have thought that infidelity was only fit for polite gentlemen, and that religion was of uſe amongſt the vulgar, and a good ſtate-engine. The remark therefore of this Author is rather lively than pertinent, that *he is not a greater madman who pays adoration to no being, than he who ſhould devoutly worſhip his dog, his hat, or his breeches.*

Homer has deſcribed to us a Republic, if we may call it ſo, of a ſort of Atheiſts, or deſpiſers of the Gods. Polyphemus ſays to Ulyſſes[a], *Stranger, thou art a fool, or thou comeſt from a far country, to talk to me of the Gods: we are ſuperior to them,*

---

[a] Νήπιος εἶς, ὦ ξεῖν', ἢ τηλόθεν εἰλήλουθας,
Ὅς με θεοὺς κέλεαι ἢ δειδέμεν, ἢ ἀλέασθαι.

and value them not. The *Cyclopes*, ſays Homer, have no religion, no magiſtrates, no aſſemblies, no laws, no induſtry, no arts, and ſciences, no civility, no reſpect for one another; but each Cyclops, in his den, rules over his wife and children as he thinks fit, and eats all the ſtragglers that fall into his hands. An excellent image of Atheiſtical polity! *Odyſſ.* I. 273.

Bayle had confirmed himſelf in an opinion that the Pagans worſhipped a rabble of coëqual, imperfect, vitious Gods; not conſidering how much the doctrine of one ſupreme and of many inferior Gods prevailed; and for this reaſon he is the more excuſable when he prefers Atheiſm to ſuch Idolatry.

As to the grace of God, ſays Bayle, the Pagans and the Atheiſts are equally deſtitute of it; and none have it beſides the Regenerate, who cannot loſe it, and who are predeſtinated to life eternal. Who taught him all this? Not the [b] Scriptures, from which he could not prove it; not the ancient Fathers, who were generally of a contrary opinion, and entertained favourable ſentiments of the wiſer Pagans; not human Reaſon, which, according to him, was only a *Jack-a-lanthorn* leading thoſe who followed it into bogs and ditches; not the Synod of Dort, and ſome modern Supralapſarians, whom he deſpiſed in his heart. He only threw out this as an *Argumentum ad hominem*; and he uſes the ſame ſort of argument, when he tells us with a ſerious face that Epiphanius, Jerom, and other Doctors of Divinity, ancient and modern, have declared *hereſy* to be worſe than *atheiſm*. As if there were any abſurdity, that ſome Doctor, as well as ſome Philoſopher, has not maintained! Jerom's learning and abilities deſerve to be honoured, but his impetuous temper is no ſecret to thoſe who have looked into his writings. When he was warmed with diſputing, he would call

---

[b] See *the imperfect promulgation of the Goſpel conſidered* in a very good Sermon by Biſhop Bradford.

Hunc Furiam, hunc aliud, juſſit quod ſplendida bilis.

There have been Pagans, who have believed in one God, great and good, and in inferior Deities deriving their powers and perfections from the Father of Gods and men, themſelves good and beneficent, and guilty of none of thoſe vices and follies which poetical and fabulous hiſtory aſcribed to them; they have alſo perhaps believed that there were malevolent Dæmons, who were ſometimes permitted to do miſchief, but who were ſubject to the power and control of the Deity; and certainly ſuch a religion (though accompanied with ſome degree of ſuperſtition) together with a belief of the *honeſtum* and the *turpe*, and with a tolerable ſyſtem of morality, and with ſome conjectural hopes of a life after this, is far preferable to Atheiſm, to the doctrine that a God, and a providence, and another ſtate, are

Rumores vacui, verbaque inania,
Et par ſollicito fabula ſomnio.

I pretend not to deny that ſome Atheiſts of old had notions of the *honeſtum* and the *turpe*, and might act ſuitably to them: yet ſurely they had not ſo many motives to virtue, as the Pagans of whom I am now ſpeaking.

But, ſays Bayle, if you had examined theſe Pagans, and reaſoned with them concerning the ſupreme God, you would have found that they entertained ſome notions, the conſequences of which were abſurd, and would have deſtroyed the fair idea. And is not that the caſe of ſome Jews and Chriſtians? Men muſt not be charged with all the conſequences, which may perhaps regularly follow from their notions, whilſt they neither draw them, nor perceive them, nor own them.

Which ſyſtem is beſt, that of Socrates, or that of Epicurus? that of the Platonics, or Stoics, or that of Hobbes, of Spinoza[c], and perhaps of Bayle, who too often made a bad uſe of his great abilities, and who taught that a man could not believe that God was good and wiſe, and that Chriſtianity was true, without ſacrificing *Reaſon to Faith*, or, in plain Engliſh, without renouncing common ſenſe?

---

[c] Spinoza has endeavoured to ſhew that there can be no ſuch thing as liberty, and that there is no God. But how? by a ſyſtem of jargon, adorned at proper diſtances with Q. E. D. Great is the force of *initial letters!* Yet has this abſurd and cloudy Philoſopher

This ingenious and unaccountable Author had frequent quarrels with *Reaſon*, which at laſt ran ſo high, that he gave her a Bill of Divorce, and turned her out of doors, with, *Res tuas tibi habeto:*

---

found admirers and diſciples, who have followed him, as they ſay the *Tiger* follows the *Rhinoceros*, to eat his excrements. Spinoza held a *plenum*, which was neceſſary for his purpoſe. If there be a *vacuum*, Spinoza's God, or the material world, is a limited, imperfect ſubſtance, and depends on ſome cauſe. Abſolute *Perfection* neither requires nor admits a cauſe, or an antecedent reaſon: but of *limitation* and *imperfection* there muſt be ſome cauſe. Spinoza would have owned this conſequence from the admiſſion of a *vacuum*, for he ſays, that what is neceſſarily exiſting, muſt be infinite. He ſhould therefore have proved the exiſtence of a *plenum*: *Quod Erat Demonſtrandum.* The doctrine of a *vacuum* is the ſpunge of all Atheiſtical ſyſtems.

And yet, when he had diſcarded her, he would reaſon againſt her. That is,

Nec tecum poſſum vivere, nec ſine te:

An abſurdity, which ſticks, like the ſhirt of Hercules, to all thoſe, of all denominations, who argue againſt *Reaſon*, as againſt a falſe and fallacious guide. To rail at her, and call her names, though it be not ſo genteel, yet is rather leſs ridiculous, for ſhe will never furniſh arms againſt herſelf. But theſe perſons are uſually as fond of their notions, as Job was of his integrity; they *hold them faſt, and will not let them go*: and who would diſpute with thoſe, who, upon their own principles, muſt neither give nor take a reaſon?

Mr. Bayle a pretendu prouver qu'il valoit mieux être Athée qu'Idolâtre; c'eſt à dire en d'autres termes, qu'il eſt moins dangereux de n'avoir point de tout de religion, que d'en avoir une mauvaiſe. —

Dire que la Religion n'eſt pas un motif réprimant, parce qu'elle ne réprime pas toûjours,

toûjours, c'eſt dire que les Loix civiles ne ſont pas un motif réprimant non plus. C'eſt mal raiſonner contre la Religion de raſſembler dans un grand Ouvrage une longue énumération des maux qu'elle a produits; ſi l'on ne fait de même celle des biens qu'elle a faits. Si je voulois raconter tous les maux qu'ont produit dans le monde les Loix civiles, la Monarchie, le Gouvernement Républicain, je dirois des choſes effroyables. Quand il ſeroit inutile que les ſujets euſſent une religion, il ne le ſeroit pas que les Princes en euſſent, et qu'ils blanchiſſent d'écume le ſeul frein, que ceux qui ne craignent pas les Loix humaines, puiſſent avoir. —

La queſtion n'eſt pas de ſçavoir, s'il vaudroit mieux qu'un certain homme ou qu'un certain peuple n'eut point de religion, que d'abuſer de celle qu'il a; mais de ſçavoir quel eſt le moindre mal, que l'on abuſe quelquefois de la religion, ou qu'il n'y en ait point du-tout parmi les hommes.

Pour diminuer l'horreur de l'Athéiſme on charge trop l'Idolatrie. —

Il convient que (dans le gouvernement Deſpotique) il y ait quelque Livre ſacré qui ſerve de règle. — Le Code Religieux ſupplée au Code Civil, et fixe l'arbitraire.

Le Roi de Perſe eſt le Chef de la Religion, mais l'Alcoran règle la Religion: l'Empéreur de la Chine eſt le Souverain Pontife, mais il y a des Livres qui ſont entre les mains de tout le monde, auxquels il y doit lui-même ſe conformer. En vain un Empéreur voulut-il les abolir; ils triomphèrent de la tyrannie. L'Eſprit des Loix. l. xxiv. ch. 2. l. xii. ch. 29. l. xxv. ch. 8.

Je ne ſuis pas du ſentiment (de Mr. Bayle) que l'Atheiſme ſoit préferable à l'Idolatrie Payenne, en tout ſens. Pour repondre à la queſtion, il faudroit, ce me ſemble, premierement diſtinguer des ſocietez, les opinions conſiderées d'une maniere abſtraite, et faire d'un côté la deſcription de l'Atheiſme, et de l'autre celle de l'Idolatrie. L'on trouveroit peut-être qu'il y a telle Idolatrie, qui ſeroit préferable à l'Atheiſme, et *telle autre qui ſeroit pire. Ainſi, je ne puis répondre ni oui, ni non, à la queſtion generalle de Mr. Bayle. En ſecond lieu, quand il s'agiroit de conſiderer, non les opinions en general, mais les Societez en elles mêmes, qui feroient profeſſion de l'Idolatrie Payenne, ou de l'Atheiſme; il faudroit encore faire de grandes diſtinctions, & diviſer la queſtion en pluſieurs propoſitions, ſelon les differens cas que l'on poſeroit, et auxquels on répondroit négativement, ou affirmativement, ſuivant leur diverſité. Je n'ai ni le loiſir, ni la volonté de m'appliquer à cette ſorte de recherche, et je n'en aurois même rien dit, ſi Mr. Bayle ne m'avoit fait l'honneur, de me citer, entre ceux, quil croit être de ſon ſentiment, dans* l'Article lxxvii. de la Continuation des penſees diverſes ſur les Cometes. *Le Clerc,* Bibl. Choiſ. V. 302.

Si ce qu'on nous dit des opinions, des loix, & des mœurs des ſujets des Yncas eſt vrai, il n'y a point eu d'Empire Idolatre dans les autres parties du monde, ſans en excepter ceux des nations les plus polies et les plus ſavantes,

vantes, où il y ait eu de ſi bonnes loix; et ou elles aient été ſi bien obſervées. La religion, qui conſiſtoit principalement à adorer et à ſacrifier au Soleil — non des victimes humaines — mais des bêtes et d'autres choſes, a été la moins gâtée, qu'il y ait eu parmi les Idolatres. Outre le Soleil, ils diſoient qu'il y avoit une autre Divinité. — Ils parloient de ce Dieu, comme d'un etre inviſible, dont la nature leur étoit inconnue, et qui avoit créé le Soleil même et les étoiles. Ils croyoient auſſi l'immortalité de l'ame, et avoient même une idée confuſe de la réſurrection; à ce que dit Garcilaſſo de la Vega. *— Suppoſé que ce qu'il dit ſoit véritable, on peut dire qu'une Societé Idolatre comme celle-là, étoit incomparablement meilleure que ne le ſeroit une ſocieté d'Athées.—Ceux qui n'ont pas encore lû cette hiſtoire ſeront charmez de l'excellente police des Peruviens, de la charité qu'ils avoient pour les pauvres, les veuves & les orphelins, et de l'innocence de leurs mœurs, à les conſiderer comme des peuples deſtituez des lumieres de la Revelation. Il y aura même bien des gens, qui ſeront plus édifiez des* Vertus Morales *des*

Americains, deſtituez des lumieres du Ciel, que des Vertus Theologiques *des Eſpagnols, qui ſont, comme ils le croyent, les meilleurs Chrétiens du monde.* — Le Clerc. *Bibl. Choiſ.* V. *p.* 380.

Bayle, after having ſhewed us the worſt ſide of Paganiſm, proceeds to inſult Chriſtianity, and to tell us that a nation conſiſting of true Chriſtians muſt ſoon periſh, and could not maintain itſelf againſt its irreligious neighbours, which doctrine is alſo retailed in that flagitious and deteſtable book called *The Fable of the Bees.* And how does this appear? Is it becauſe Chriſtianity makes a man a poltroon? He does not pretend to ſay that: but becauſe, according to the Goſpel, ſelf-defenſe is unlawful, ſtratagems in war are crimes, merchandizing is wickedneſs, and riches and honours are prohibited. They who talk thus ſhew that they underſtand not, or will not underſtand either the ſtrong and figurative ſtyle of the Scriptures, or the rational methods of interpreting them, or the true nature of virtues and vices.

If this Author propoſed to himſelf to acquire the applauſe of Free-thinkers, he had his reward: but when Phocion had made a ſpeech which was applauded by the populace, he aſked, Have I not ſaid ſome fooliſh thing?

To return to Divination, it appears from the Scriptures that ſome good and great men, when they were taking leave of the world, and bleſſing their children, or their nation, were enlightened with a prophetic ſpirit. Homer makes his heroes, as Patroclus, and Hector, propheſy at the time of their death; and Cicero introduces his brother thus arguing in behalf of divination: *Epicurum ergo antepones Platoni & Socrati? qui ut rationem non redderent, auctoritate tamen hos minutos philoſophos vincerent. Jubet igitur Plato, ſic ad ſomnum proficiſci corporibus affectis, ut nihil ſit, quod errorem animis perturbationemque afferat. —— Quum ergo eſt ſomno ſevocatus animus a ſocietate, et a contagione corporis, tum meminit præteritorum, præſentia cernit, futura prævidet; jacet*

jacet enim corpus — viget animus: quod multo magis faciet poſt mortem — itaque appropinquante morte multo eſt divinior. — Divinare autem morientes, etiam illo exemplo confirmat Poſidonius, — Idque facilius eveniet appropinquante morte, ut animi futura augurentur. Ex quo et illud eſt Calani, de quo ante dixi, et Homerici Hectoris, qui moriens propinquam Achilli mortem denuntiat. De Divin. i. 30.

The Pagans had alſo an opinion that the good wiſhes and the imprecations of parents were often fulfilled, and had in them a kind of divination. Read the ſtory of Phœnix in Homer, *Il.* I. 445, &c. And Plato ſays that every wiſe perſon revered and eſteemed the prayers of his parents, knowing that they were very frequently accompliſhed. Πᾶς δὴ νοῦν ἔχων φοβεῖται ϗ τιμᾷ γονέων εὐχὰς, εἰδὼς πολλοῖς ϗ πολλάκις ἐπιτελεῖς γενομένας. *De Leg.* xi. p. 931. Conſult the place and compare it with the caſe of Eſau, in *Gen.* xxvii.

Euſebius has treated the ſubject of Oracles in his *Præparatio Evangelica.*

L. iv. v. vi. He produces ſuch arguments as tend to ſhew that it was all human fraud, and amongſt other things, he informs us that many Pagan prieſts and prophets, who (under Conſtantine, I ſuppoſe) had been taken up and tried, and tortured, had confeſſed that the Oracles were impoſtures, and had laid open the whole contrivance, and that their confeſſions ſtood upon record, and that theſe were not obſcure wretches, but Philoſophers and Magiſtrates, who had enriched themſelves by perſecuting and plundering the Chriſtians. So Theodoret tells us that in demoliſhing the temples at Alexandria, the Chriſtians found hollow ſtatues fixed to the walls, into which the prieſts uſed to enter, and thence deliver oracles. v. 22. Euſebius adds, that the Peripatetics, Cynics, and Epicureans were of opinion that ſuch predictions were all artifice and knavery. He then produces the arguments of Diogenianus againſt Divination. But Euſebius, as alſo all the ancient Chriſtians, was of opinion that with theſe human frauds there might have been ſometimes a mixture of Dæmoniacal tricks. *Pr. Ev.* vii. 16. He then argues againſt the oracles from the conceſſions and the writings of Pagans. He ſhews from Porphyry, that, according to that philoſopher's own principles, and according to the reaſonings of other Pagans, the gods who delivered oracles muſt have been evil Dæmons. He proves the ſame thing from human ſacrifices, and produces Porphyry's teſtimony and opinion that the Pagans worſhipped evil Dæmons, the chief of whom were *Sarapis* and *Hecate.* He proves the ſame from Plutarch, and he gives a collection made by Oenomaus of wicked, falſe, trifling, ambiguous oracles.

The old Oracles often begin with Ἀλλ' ὅταν, *But when*, which is an odd ſetting out. Thus in Herodotus,

Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἡμίονος — i. 55.
Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἐν Σίφνῳ — iii. 57.
Ἀλλ' ὅταν ἡ θήλεια — vi. 77.
Ἀλλ' ὅταν Ἀρτέμιδος — viii. 77.

In the *Oracula Vetera*,

Ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν καθύπερθε —
Ἀλλὰ τέλει ξόανον —
Ἀλλ' ὁπόταν σκήπτροισι —
Ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ νύμφαι —
Ἀλλ' ὁπόταν Τιθορεῦς —
Ἀλλ' ὅταν οἰκήσωσι —

In imitation of which ſtyle, we find in the Sibylline Oracles, and in the beginning of a ſentence,

Ἀλλ' ὁπόταν μεγάλοιο Θεοῦ —

And ſo in many places of that Collection, which I ſhall not tranſcribe.

Hence Ariſtophanes, in banter, I ſuppoſe, of the predictions in Herodotus, makes a pompous and ridiculous Oracle, and uſes the ſame fooliſh introduction, to perſuade a Sauſage-monger to ſet up for a demagogue and a ruler. The Oracle is in Heroic verſe, and runs thus: *Equit.* 197.

Ἀλλ' ὁπόταν μάρψῃ βυρσαίετος ἀγκυλοχείλης
Γαμφηλῇσι δράκοντα κοάλεμον, αἱματοπώτην,

Νὴ τότε Παφλαγόνων μὲν ἀπόλλυται ἡ σκοροδάλμη·
Κοιλιοπώλησιν δὲ Θεὸς μέγα κῦδος ὀπάζει,
Αἴκεν μὴ πωλεῖν ἀλλᾶντας μᾶλλον ἕλωνται.

But when the Tanner-Eagle with a crooked beak ſhall ſeize the ſtupid blood-drinking Dragon, then the Paphlagonian pickle ſhall periſh, and the Deity ſhall advance the ſauſage-mongers to the higheſt honours, if they will but leave off their trade, and ſell no more puddings.

Lucian alſo, *De Morte Peregrini*, gives us two Oracles made upon the death of that Knave, who burnt himſelf publicly; the one by a ſeeming friend, the other by a foe.

The firſt was aſcribed to the *Sibyl;* who was the *Mother Shipton* of the Ancients:

Ἀλλ' ὁπόταν Πρωτεὺς Κυνικῶν ὄχ' ἄριστος ἁπάντων
Ζηνὸς ἐριγδούπου τέμενος κατὰ πῦρ ἀνακαύσας
Ἐς φλόγα πηδήσας ἔλθῃ εἰς μακρὸν Ὄλυμπον;
Δὴ τότε πάντας ὁμῶς, οἱ ἀρούρης καρπὸν ἔδουσι,

Νυκτιπόλον τιμᾷν κέλομαι Ἥρωα μέγιστον,
Σύνθρονόν Ἡφαίστῳ καὶ Ἡρακλῆϊ ἄνακτι.

But when Proteus, the chief of the Cynics, leaping into the flames, near the temple of Jupiter, ſhall aſcend up to Olympus, then let all mortals with one conſent adore the nocturnal Hero, and rank him with Vulcan and Hercules.

The ſecond was fathered upon *Bacis*, the *Noſtradamus* of his times:

Ἀλλ᾽ ὁπόταν Κυνικὸς πολυώνυμος ἐς φλόγα
πολλὴν
Πηδήσῃ δόξης ὑπ᾽ ἐριννύϊ θυμὸν ὀρινθεὶς,
Δὴ τότε τοὺς ἄλλους κυναλώπεκας, οἵ οἱ ἕπονται,
Μιμεῖσθαι χρὴ πότμον ἀποιχομένοιο λύκοιο.
Ὃς δέ κε δειλὸς ἐὼν, φεύγει μένος Ἡφαίστοιο,
Λάεσσιν βαλέειν τοῦτον τάχα πάντας Ἀχαιοὺς,
Ὡς μὴ ψυχρὸς ἐὼν, θερμηγορέειν ἐπιχειρῇ,
Χρυσῷ σαξάμενος πήρην, μάλα πολλὰ δα-
νείζων,
Ἐν καλαῖς Πάτραισιν ἔχων τρὶς πέντε τάλαντα.

But when the Cynic, who has more names than one, incited by the Furies, and by the mad love of vain-glory, ſhall jump into the flames,

flames, then let all the Dog-foxes, his truſty diſciples, follow the example of the departed Wolf. And if any one of them ſhrink, and be afraid of the fire, let all the Greeks pelt him with ſtones, that he may no more ſhew his courage only by prating, and put gold into his ſatchel, and lend it out to intereſt, and add to the fifteen talents which he has hoarded up at Patræ.

It is probable that Lucian made both theſe Oracles, to divert himſelf and his readers, not forgetting the eſſential Ἀλλ' ὅταν. But Lucian's raillery could not put a ſtop to the ſuperſtition of the world; for this Peregrinus, or Proteus, was deified, and had, at Parium, a ſtatue erected, to which religious honours were paid, and which delivered oracles. See Athenagoras *Legat.*

The comedy of Ariſtophanes, cited above, abounds with ridicule upon the Oracles, and ſhews the liberty which the Wits in his days took to deride them, and to bring them into contempt.

If the writer *de Dea Syria* be in earneſt, and ſincere in his narration, as he ſeems to be, there were few Pagan Temples and Oracles more remarkable than that of Hierapolis in Syria, and from his account it may be inferred that the Prieſts of that temple had carried the arts of impoſture to great perfection, and ſurpaſſed their ancient inſtructors the Ægyptians, like the Thief who ſtole a ſtatue of Mercury, and told the god,

Πολλοὶ μαθηταὶ κρείσσονες διδασκάλων.

The Ægyptians, ſays this author, were the firſt who had knowledge of the Gods; and built them temples, &c. and from them the Aſſyrians learned theſe things. Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus ſay the ſame. Lucian. de Dea Syr. § 2.

Ἔνι δὲ —— καὶ θεοὶ δὲ κάρτα αὐτοῖσι ἐμφανέες. ἱδρώει γὰρ δὴ ὦν παρὰ σφίσι τὰ ξόανα, καὶ κινέεται καὶ χρησμηγορέει· καὶ βοὴ δὲ πολλάκις ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ νηῷ, κλεισθέντος τοῦ ἱροῦ, καὶ πολλοὶ ἤκουσαν. *Sunt autem —— præſentes valde iis Dii. Sudant enim apud illos ſimulacra, et moventur, atque edunt oracula. Clamor etiam ſæpe in æde multis exaudientibus ortus cum clauſum eſſet templum.*

They had a ſtatue of Apollo, differing from the Græcian images of that God in two things, he was repreſented with a beard, and he was cloathed; and he delivered his oracles thus:

Μαντήϊα πολλὰ μὲν παρ' Ἕλλησι, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ παρ' Αἰγυπτίοισι, τὰ δὲ καὶ ἐν τῇ Λιβύῃ, καὶ ἐν τῇδε Ἀσίῃ πολλά ἐστι. ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν οὔτε ἱρέων ἄνευ οὔτε προφητέων φθέγγονται. ὅδε δὲ αὐτός τε κινέεται, καὶ τὴν μαντηίην ἐς τέλος αὐτουργέει. τρόπος δὲ αὐτῆς τοιόσδε. εὖτ' ἂν ἐθέλῃσι χρησμηγορέειν, ἐν τῇ ἕδρῃ πρῶτα κινέεται. οἱ δέ μιν ἱρέες αὐτίκα ἀείρουσι. ἢν δὲ μὴ ἀείρωσι, ὁ δὲ ἱδρώει, καὶ ἐς μέσον ἔτι κινέεται. εὖτ' ἂν δὲ ὑποδύντες φέρωσι, ἄγει σφέας, πάντῃ περιδινέων, καὶ ἐς ἄλλον ἐξ ἑτέρου μεταπηδέων. τέλος ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς ἀντιάσας, ἐπερέεταί μιν περὶ ἁπάντων πρηγμάτων· ὁ δὲ ἤν τι μὴ θέλῃ ποιέεσθαι, ὀπίσω ἀναχωρέει. ἢν δέ τι ἐπαινέῃ, ἄγει ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοὺς προσφέροντας, ὅκωσπερ ἡνιοχέων. οὕτω μὲν συναγείρουσι τὰ θέσφατα, καὶ οὔτε ἱρὸν πρῆγμα οὐδὲν, οὔτε ἴδιον τούτου ἄνευ ποιέουσι. λέγει δὲ καὶ τοῦ ἔτεος πέρι, καὶ τῶν ὡρέων αὐτοῦ πασέων, καὶ ὁκότε οὐκ ἔσονται. λέγει δὲ καὶ τοῦ Σημηΐου πέρι, κότε χρή μιν ἀποδημέειν, τὴν εἶπον ἀποδημίην.

Ἐρέω δὲ καὶ ἄλλο τὸ ἐμεῦ παρεόντος ἔπρηξε. οἱ μὲν μιν ἱρέες ἀείροντες ἔφερον, ὁ δὲ τοὺς μὲν ἐν γῇ κάτω ἔλιπε, αὐτὸς δὲ ἐν τῷ ἠέρι μοῦνος ἐφορέετο. *Oracula apud Græcos multa, multa apud Ægyptios. Verum etiam in Libya et in Aſia multa ſunt. Sed alia non ſine ſacerdotibus vel prophetis reſpondent: at hic movetur ipſe, et divinationem ad finem uſque ſolus perducit. Modus hic eſt. Cum vult reddere oraculum, in ſede primum ſua movetur. Sacerdotes vero ipſum continuo tollunt. Si vero non tollant, ille ſudat, et verſus medium adhuc movetur. Cum vero ſubeuntes onus ipſum ferunt, agit illos uſque quaque in orbem, et in alium ex alio tranſilit. Tandem obſiſtens ſacerdotum princeps interrogat illum de rebus omnibus. Iſque ſi nolit fieri, retrocedit; ſi vero probet, antrorſum agit ſuos bajulos, tanquam habenis auriga. Ita colligunt oracula, & neque rem ſacram ullam neque privatam ſine hoc faciunt. Prædicit etiam de anno omnibuſque illius tempeſtatibus, et quando non futuræ ſint: item prædicit de Signo, quando eam, quam dicebam modo, profectionem ſuſcipiat. Narrabo etiam aliud, quod me præſente egit. Sacerdotes*

ſublatum ferebant. At ipſe illos humi reliquit, ſublimis ipſe ſolus ferebatur. Ib. § 36, 37.

This author ſays here that he ſaw the Image ſuſpended and moving along in the air, upon which La Croze and Guietus obſerve that he is a liar[d]. They did not conſider that feats as ſurpriſing as this have been performed by machinery aſſiſted with legerdemain, and that Chriſtian Monks, as well as Pagan Prieſts, have been eminent in ſuch arts. We are obliged to the Writer for not omitting a remarkable circumſtance, that the image was adorned with a fine robe; the cloke was not put on for nothing, and ſerved in all probability to conceal ſome knavery.

The tricks of the Ægyptian prieſts were not to be compared to this: their little gods, when they were carried in proceſſion, did not ſweat, like theſe ſtatues, but only made the Porters ſweat:

---

[d] Cicero mentions the old ſtory of the wooden *lituus* of Romulus, which was not conſumed in a fire, and treats it as a fable, *De Divin.* ii. 38. and yet it might poſſibly be true; for incombuſtible wood has been diſcovered.

—— *ſic numina Memphis*
In vulgus proferre ſolet: penetralibus exit
Effigies; brevis illa quidem: ſed plurimus infra
Liniger impoſito ſuſpirat vecte ſacerdos,
Teſtatus ſudore Deum.

Claudian iv. *Conſ. Hon.* 569.

Obſerve that this ſtatue did not ſpeak, and that when the Writer ſays λέγει ἔτερος πέρη, he only means that it *indicated* or *declared*. From his account we may collect that when any queſtion was put to it, if it retired and drew back, that was as much as to ſay, *No*: if it advanced, the meaning was, *Yes*.

We have accounts very like this, from other Authors, of other ſtatues and oracles. Diodorus Sic. xvii. ſays of Jupiter Ammon: Τὸ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ ξόανον — τὴν μαντείαν ἰδιάζουσαν παντελῶς ποιεῖται. ἐπὶ νεὼς γὰρ περιφέρεται χρυσῆς ὑπὸ ἱερέων ὀγδοήκοντα. οὗτοι δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων φέροντες τὸν θεὸν, προάγουσιν αὐτομάτως, ὅπου ποτ' ἂν ἄγοι τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ νεῦμα τὴν πορείαν. *Simulacrum Dei --- peculiari novoque plane vaticinandi genere oracula edit. In aurea enim navi a ſacerdotibus octoginta circumfertur; qui humeris Deum geſtantes eo tendunt, quo forte fortuna Dei nutus eos agit.* Compare with this *Q. Curtius* iv. 7. Macrobius, i. 23. ſays, *Hujus* [*Heliopolitani*] *templi religio etiam divinatione præpollet, quæ ad Apollinis poteſtatem refertur, qui idem atque Sol eſt. Vehitur enim ſimulacrum Dei Heliopolitani ferculo, --- et ſubeunt plerumque provinciæ proceres, raſo capite, longi temporis caſtimonia puri; feruntur que divino ſpiritu, non ſuo arbitrio, ſed quo Deus propellit vehentes: ut videmus apud Antium promoveri ſimulacra Fortunarum ad danda reſponſa.* Strabo ſays from Calliſthenes, that Ammon delivered his anſwers, οὐ διὰ λόγων, ἀλλὰ νεύμασι καὶ συμβόλοις τὸ πλέον. *non verbis, ſed ut plurimum nutu et ſignis.* See Van Dale *De Orac.* p. 210. who produces theſe paſſages of Diodorus, Macrobius, and Strabo, and adds ſome from other authors.

The writer *de Dea Syria* tells us that the beaſts which were kept in this ſacred place loſt their natural fierceneſs. Ἐν δὲ τῇ αὐλῇ ἄφετοι νέμονται βόες μεγάλοι, ϗ ἵπποι, ϗ ἀετοὶ, ϗ ἄρκτοι, ϗ λέοντες, ϗ ἀνθρώπους οὐδαμᾶ σίνονται, ἀλλὰ πάντες ἱροί τε εἰσι, ϗ χειροήθεες. *In aula ſoluti paſcuntur boves magni, et equi, et aquilæ, et urſi, et leones, qui nequaquam nocent hominibus, ſed ſacri omnes ſunt, et manſueti.* § 41.

The city and temple alſo, as he informs us, ſwarmed with *Galli*, or *caſtrated prieſts*, who perhaps performed the ſame operation upon theſe wild beaſts, which they had performed upon themſelves; and this, together with due correction adminiſtered from time to time, and a good education, and ſeeing much company, and proper food, and a full belly, and three meals a day, would make theſe lions and bears as tame as lambs. The μεγάλοι βόες were probably *oxen*, who grow to a much larger ſize than bulls; and a bull is a ſurly animal, with whom it is hard to cultivate any friendſhip.

Van Dale obſerves from Theophraſtus, that cedar, and thoſe ſorts of wood which contain an oily moiſture, will have a dew upon them in damp weather, and that ſtatues made of them will ſweat, which paſſed for a prodigy with ſilly people. He mentions this, as illuſtrating what is ſaid in the book *De Dea Syria* concerning ſweating images: but I rather think that the Prieſts there had ſome ſurer contrivance to bring about this miracle, and could make their images ſweat when they thought it proper.

The Book *de Dea Syria* is very entertaining, and compoſed elegantly, and in the Ionic dialect: the Author ſeems to have been a Pagan who gave credit to prodigies, oracles, and the power of the Gods, which was not Lucian's caſe. If Lucian wrote it, to whom it is aſcribed, one might ſuſpect that as he propoſed to follow Herodotus in ſtyle and manner, ſo he affected to imitate him in gravely relating marvellous and ſtrange things. But if this were his deſign, it was of too refined a nature, and by the ſeriouſneſs which runs through the whole compoſition, the jeſt has been hitherto loſt. Lucian, *Ver. Hiſt.* ii. 31. banters Herodotus as a liar, tho unjuſtly, I think; for in this charming Hiſtorian there are ſome marks of credulity, but none of diſhoneſty: Whoſoever made the book, and with whatſoever intent, his narration ſeems to be hiſtorically true, and much of it is confirmed by other writers. We are informed by Fabricius *Bibl. Gr.* iii. 501. that Jurieu, in his *Hiſtory of the Jewiſh Rites and Doctrines*, has concluded that Lucian was not the author of this Treatiſe, becauſe it is written in the Ionic Dialect. The argument proves nothing, for Lucian was an ingenious monkey, who could imitate what he would, and throw himſelf into all ſhapes; and he might affect this ſweetly-flowing ſtyle, for ſeveral reaſons, or out of mere fancy; and Arrian, as Fabricius obſerves, wrote his *Indica* in this dialect, though he compoſed his other works in the Attic diction. I have not Jurieu's book to conſult, and perhaps it is not worth the ſeeking. Jurieu made a figure in his time, and had more zeal than diſcretion. He wrote ſome Tracts of Devotion, and he was remarkable for two things, firſt for miſinterpreting the Apocalypſe, and thence foretelling what never came to paſs, ſecondly for publiſhing idle ſtories againſt Grotius, and other learned men, in a book called *L'Eſprit de Monſieur Arnauld.* The book at firſt had a run, for Cenſure is of a healthy complexion, and thrives better than Panegyric; and as it has been ſaid of a Hog [e], that his ſoul is given him inſtead of ſalt, to keep him from ſtinking, ſo what is called *Secret Hiſtory* will preſerve even a ſlovenly performance from decaying, longer than one would imagine: but now this work would be little known, if Bayle and Le Clerc and others had not chaſtiſed it, in which perhaps they did it too much honour. Jurieu by treating Grotius as an Infidel, went to work like a bungler, for, *Eſt ars etiam maledicendi*, as Joſeph Scaliger ſaid upon a like occaſion, and it requires ſomething of a hand to throw dirt. Boſſuet, though he did not fight with ſuch weapons as Jurieu, yet attacked Grotius, as a dangerous author and a Socinian, and made remarks upon him which are mere declamation and *verbiage.* It is one thing to be *Biſhop of Meaux*, and another thing to be *Hugo Grotius:*

---

[e] Cicero *De Nat. Deor.* ii. 64.

Οὐ[f] γὰρ ἐν μέσοισι κεῖται
Δῶρα δυσμαχητὰ Μοισᾶν
Τᾠπιτυχόντι φέρειν.

Calmet, if I remember right, has alſo treated Grotius in the ſame manner. Grotius was inclined to think and to judge rather too favourably, than too hardly of the Church of Rome; for which ſome of the Eccleſiaſtics of that communion have repaid him with the gratitude that was to be expected, and have taught by-ſtanders, that he who endeavours to ſtroke a tiger into good humour, will at leaſt have his fingers bitten off in the experiment.

---

[f] Non enim in medio jacent
Ardua dona Muſarum
A quolibet auferenda.

Herodotus is of opinion that Divination and Oracles had their riſe in Ægypt, and thence came into Afric and Greece, and that the Oracle at Dodona was the moſt ancient in Greece. L. ii. The opinion is very probable, for Ægypt was the nurſery of idolatry and ſuperſtition. Homer mentions the temple of Jupiter at Dodona, and that of Apollo at Pytho, or Delphi, as being illuſtrious in the time of the Trojan war, and repreſents the latter as immenſely rich. Il. Π. 233. I. 404.

Herodotus ſhews us the great authority of oracles, from ancient times down to his own, by which kingdoms were diſpoſed of, and war and peace were made. He relates that the Heraclidæ, who, before Gyges, reigned in Lydia, at Sardes, obtained the kingdom by an oracle, and that Gyges, who ſlew his maſter Candaules, had the kingdom adjudged to him by the Delphic Oracle, which favour he rewarded by ſending thither large gifts. Herodotus every where ſpeaks of oracles, divination, and prodigies, as one who firmly believed in them, and who was diſpleaſed with thoſe that ſlighted them. See viii. 77. He gives us there an Oracle of Bacis, in which there is a remarkable expreſſion, and in the ſtyle of the Scriptures,

Δῖα δίκη σβέσσει κρατερὸν κόρον, ὕβριος υἱόν.

Compeſcet juvenem meritiſſima pœna ſuperbum.

as *Pſalm* lxxxix. 22.—*nor the* ſon *of* wickedneſs *afflict him.* 2 *Sam.* vii. 10. *neither ſhall the* children *of* wickedneſs *afflict them.* Judas is called *the ſon of perdition,* John xvii. 12. where ſee Grotius.

Herodotus alſo relates prophetic dreams which were ſaid to have been accompliſhed; as the dream of Crœſus, of Aſtyages, and of others. *Having travelled,* ſays Prideaux, *through Ægypt, Syria, and ſeveral other countries, in order to the writing of his hiſtory, he did, as travellers uſed to do, he put down relations upon truſt, as he met with them, and no doubt was impoſed upon in many of them.*

Van Dale, in his book *De Oraculis*, obſerves that the Oracular temples were uſually ſituated in mountainous places, which abounded with caverns fitted for frauds:

That the oracles were delivered only at ſtated times:

That at Delphi, the prieſteſs had prieſts, prophets, and poets, to take down and explain and mend her gibberiſh; which ſerved to juſtify Apollo from the imputation of making bad verſes, for if they were defective, the fault was laid upon the Amanuenſis:

That the conſulters ſometimes wrote their requeſts, and received anſwers in writing:

That the prieſts had the art of opening letters and cloſing them again, without breaking the ſeal:

That the *adyta*, whence the oracles were delivered, were ſhaded with branches, and clouded with incenſe, to help the fraud:

That in the temples ſweet ſmells were ſuddenly diffuſed, to ſhew that the God was in good humour:

That there are drugs, herbs, and fumigations which will make a man foam at the mouth, and be delirious, and that the prieſteſs might uſe ſuch methods:

That it might alſo ſometimes be grimace and artifice:

That the God ſometimes gave anſwers himſelf, by a voice, or by the motion of his ſtatue, etc.

THIS is what I had to offer concerning Divination, and prophecy in general, the Sibylline Oracles excepted, which ſhall be examined apart.

THE PROPHECIES relating to our Saviour, and to Chriſtianity, have ſome of them a mixture of obſcurity, and the interpretations which have been given of them are various: but this ought to be matter neither of wonder, nor of offence, becauſe in the nature of things it cannot be otherwiſe.

It were indeed to be wondered, if obſcurity ſhould not lie upon ſome of the prophecies, the lateſt whereof was written at the diſtance of above two thouſand years ago.

Prophetic writings, beſides what is common to them with other writings, to grow dark with age, have ſomething peculiar in their nature to render them leſs intelligible. Prophecies, remote from the time of their accompliſhment, and whoſe completion depends on the concurrence of free agents, are not wont to be delivered very diſtinctly at firſt.

The obſcurity becomes greater, from the language wherein they are written. The Hebrew, as other Eaſtern languages, is entirely different from the European. Many things are there left to be ſupplied by the quickneſs of the reader's apprehenſion, which are with us expreſſed by proper words and *repetitions. Particles disjunctive and adverſative, ſignificative marks of connection and of tranſition from one ſubject to another are often omitted here. Dialogues are carried on, objections anſwered, compariſons made, without notice in the diſcourſe; and through frequent change of perſons, tenſes, and numbers, we are left to gueſs who are the perſons ſpoken of, which gave no difficulty to them whoſe living language it was.*

The prophetic ſtyle is of all other the moſt copious this way. It ſeems to be a ſort of language by itſelf. It ties itſelf to no order or method, but paſſes from one ſubject to another inſenſibly, and ſuddenly reſumes it again, and often ſallies out to the main thing that was intended in the prophet's thoughts. The prophets uſed to act part of what they were to foretell. Thoſe actions ſupplying the place of words, and being not expreſſed in the writing, a ſort of chaſm is ſometimes to be diſcerned in them; as at other times, different diſcourſes, or addreſſes, diſtinguiſhable in the ſpeaking, by proper ſigns and motions, ſeem now to be connected, though they have no relation to each other.---

What increaſes the difficulty, is the little or no order that the Collectors have placed the prophecies in, according to the uſage of the ancients, who joined together writings upon different occaſions, of the ſame authors, and ſometimes of different authors, as if they made but one continued diſcourſe. —

The miſtake might have been in ſome meaſure prevented, had the books written by the Jews, after their return from the Babylonian captivity, remained to our days — *But theſe helps fail us, and not one book writ in the Hebrew tongue, ſince prophecy ceaſed, hath eſcaped the general calamity that hath befallen the Jewiſh writings.* Bp. Chandler *Introd.* to *Defenſe of Chriſtian.*

Oratio Jeſaiæ ſic eſt conſtructa, ut de illius arte, elegantia, ἐνεργείᾳ, *pondere, nihil tam magnificum cogitari ac dici poſſit, quin ſit infra ejus meritum.* — *Sed id ipſum eſt, quod interpretem multis in locis impedit, ejuſque, ſtudioſi etiam et bonis ſubſidiis inſtructi, diligentiam ac judicium valde exercet. Imo vero cenſeo, nullius mortalis, li-*

cet in Hebræis literis docte verſati, tantum eſſe acumen, peritiam, perſpicaciam, ut Prophetæ noſtro longe pluribus locis reddere potuerit genuinum ſuum ſenſum, niſi Lectio antiqua Synagogica per traditionem in Scholis Hebræorum fuiſſet conſervata, ut eam nunc Maſoretharum punctulis expreſſam habemus. Vitringa, *Præfat.* ad *Jeſaiam.*

Il y a dans les Prophetes beaucoup de mots très-obſcurs, qui pouvoient être clairs autrefois, que la langue Hebraïque étoit floriſſante. Il y a encore plus de paſſages, où la conſtruction et la liaiſon du diſcours ne ſont pas faciles à déveloper, et où l'on ne voit pas bien ce que les Prophetes ont voulu dire. Les alluſions fréquentes à des choſes, qui nous ſont inconnues, ſoit à l'égard des Juifs, ſoit à l'égard de la plûpart des peuples voiſins, dont il ne nous reſte aucuns monumens, ne ſervent pas peu à embarraſſer les interpretes. Le Clerc, *Bibl. Choiſ.* xxvii. 381.

Nos ſane ſuas elegantias eſſe Hebræorum Linguæ, quemadmodum ceteris omnibus, non negamus; ſed cum cultis et copioſis Linguis conferendam eſſe non putamus. Monendus

nendus tamen eſt Lector eam a nobis ſpectari, non qualis olim dum florebat fortaſſe fuit, ſed qualis ſupereſt in Libris Sacris, quibus omnes ejus reliquiæ continentur. Multo quidem plura vocabula, pluresque phraſes in uſu fuiſſe, quam quæ in modico volumine leguntur, non ægre fatemur. Sed quoad poteſt ex ejus reliquiis judicium ferri, inopem eam, ambiguam, et parum cultam fuiſſe exiſtimamus, quod jam oſtendere aggrediemur.

Linguarum omnium laudes in tribus potiſſimum rebus ſitæ ſunt, in copia vocabulorum et phraſium, in perſpicuitate orationis, ejuſque elegantia, cujus a Rhetoribus Canones deſcribuntur; quibus rebus multo Hebraicâ ſuperiores ſunt multæ Linguæ, et Græca quidem præ ceteris; nec quaſi pulcherrimam jactari Hebraicam poſſe, manifeſtum eſt, etc. etc. Le Clerc, *Proleg. ad V. T. Diſſ.* i.

Such are the difficulties which attend the interpretation of the prophecies, and which I choſe to repreſent in the words of competent judges.

And yet that Jeſus was the Meſſias foretold by the Prophets, appears thus:

The prophets ſpeak of a new and ſecond covenant, which God would make with his people. They mention, not once or twice, but very often, the converſion of the Gentiles from ſuperſtition and idolatry to the worſhip of the true God; they ſpeak of four ſucceſſive empires, the laſt of which was the Roman empire, and under this laſt empire they ſay that a new and everlaſting kingdom ſhould be eſtabliſhed by one to whom God ſhould give abſolute power and dominion. A great perſon was to come, who ſhould be Emmanuel, or, God with us, the Son of God, and the Son of man, of the ſeed of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of David; born of a virgin, poor and obſcure, and yet one whom David calls his Lord; the Lord to whom the temple belonged, the mighty God, a great king, an everlaſting prieſt, though not of the tribe of Levi; born at Bethlehem, a prophet like unto Moſes, but greater than Moſes; a prophet who ſhould preach to the poor and meek, and proclaim liberty to the captives, and comfort the mourners, and heal the broken-hearted; who ſhould proclaim his Goſpel firſt and principally in the land of Zebulon and Naphthali, in Galilee of the Gentiles; who ſhould have a forerunner in the ſpirit of Elias, crying in the wilderneſs, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; who ſhould inſtruct in a mild and peaceable manner, without wrath and contention, before the deſtruction of the temple, in which temple he ſhould be ſeen and heard; who ſhould enter into Jeruſalem meek and humble, and riding on an aſs; who ſhould work miracles more than Moſes and all the prophets, and miracles of the merciful and beneficent kind, open the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf, and make the dumb to praiſe God, and the lame to leap like an hart; who, notwithſtanding all his power and goodneſs, ſhould be rejected by the greater part of the nation, to whom he ſhould be a ſtumbling block, who ſhould be deſpiſed and afflicted, a man of ſorrow, and cut off from the land of the living; who ſhould have enemies numerous, powerful, crafty, and wicked, who ſhould be accuſed by falſe witneſſes, betrayed by an intimate and particular friend, ſold for thirty pieces of ſilver, and the money given for a potter's field, when it had been flung away by the traitor who ſhould not live long after his crime, and whoſe office ſhould be filled up by another; that his enemies ſhould uſe him contumeliouſly, buffet him, and ſpit upon him, whilſt he ſhould be led like a lamb to the ſlaughter, not opening his mouth, and uttering nothing, except interceſſions for the tranſgreſſors; that his enemies ſhould ſtrip him of his raiment, divide it amongſt themſelves, and caſt lots upon it, ſurround him, pierce his hands and his feet, mock him, and ſhake their heads at him, give him gall to eat, and vinegar to drink; that he ſhould be reduced to ſo weak and languiſhing a condition that his bones might all be counted, his heart ſhould melt within him, and his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth; that he ſhould be brought to the duſt of death, that he ſhould be pierced, and yet not one of his bones be broken, that he ſhould be laid in the ſepulchre of a rich and honourable man, none of his enemies hindering it; that he ſhould riſe again before he had ſeen corruption, and ſubdue his enemies, and aſcend into heaven, and ſit at God's right hand, and be crowned with honour and glory, and ſee his ſeed and proſper, and juſtify many, and be adored by kings and princes; that then Jeruſalem ſhould be made deſolate, and the Jews diſperſed in all lands, and the Gentiles ſhould be converted and flow into the church. Theſe things were ſaid concerning ſome perſon; and they are all applicable to Chriſt.

God foretold by his prophets in a clear and exact manner many great changes and revolutions, many things relating to the fates and fortunes of the Jews, and of the neighbouring nations with whom they were concerned. The only poſſible objection which can be made to theſe predictions, is that perhaps they were written

ten after the event. I ſhall therefore mention a few, out of ſeveral, which cannot be ſuſpected of ſuch a forgery.

[g] Ezechiel thus propheſies concerning Ægypt. *Ægypt ſhall be the baſeſt of the kingdoms, neither ſhall it exalt itſelf any more above the nations: for I will diminiſh them, that they ſhall no more rule over the nations.* xxix. 15.

Ægypt was attacked and oppreſſed by the Perſians, by Cambyſes, by Xerxes, by Darius Nothus, and conquered by Ochus three hundred and fifty years before Chriſt, and from that time to this day, the Ægyptians never had an Ægyptian king, but have been under the government of the Perſians, Macedonians, Romans, Saracens, and Turks. Euſebius was miſtaken in dating the ſubjection of Ægypt to a foreign power from the victory of Auguſtus at Actium, and the death of Antony and Cleopatra. *Dem. Evang.* vi. p. 299.

---

[g] Iſaiah propheſied more than 700, Jeremiah more than 600, and Ezechiel almoſt 600 years before Chriſt.

Concerning Babylon it was foretold; *The wild beaſts of the deſert ---ſhall dwell there, and the owls ſhall dwell therein: and it ſhall be no more inhabited for ever: neither ſhall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbour cities thereof---ſo no man ſhall dwell there, neither ſhall any ſon of man dwell therein.---They ſhall not take of thee a ſtone for a corner, nor a ſtone for foundations; but thou ſhalt be deſolate for ever, ſaith the Lord.--- Babylon ſhall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an aſtoniſhment and an hiſſing without an inhabitant.--- When thou haſt made an end of reading this book, thou ſhalt bind a ſtone to it, and caſt it into the midſt of Euphrates. And thou ſhalt ſay, Thus ſhall Babylon ſink, and ſhall not riſe from the evil that I will bring upon her.--- Babylon the glory of kingdoms ---ſhall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It ſhall never be inhabited, neither ſhall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither ſhall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither ſhall*

ſhall the ſhepherds make their fold there. But wild beaſts of the deſert ſhall lie there, and their houſes ſhall be full of doleful creatures, and owls ſhall dwell there, --- *and dragons in their pleaſant places.* Jer. l. 39. li. 26. 37. 64. Iſai. xiii. 19.

Seleucus built Seleucia, before Chriſt 293, which completed the ruin and deſolation of Babylon, a deſolation that continues to this day. *Prideaux* Connect. P. I. B. viii. p. 448. fol. Ed. and *Vitringa* on *Iſai.* xiii.

Concerning Tyre it was propheſied; *I will make thee like the top of a rock; Thou ſhalt be a place to ſpread nets upon; thou ſhalt be built no more;* --- *thou ſhalt be a terror, and never ſhalt be any more.* Ezech. xxvi. 14. 21. xxvii. 36. xxviii. 19.

Old Tyre, and new Tyre are no more, and only exiſt in hiſtory. *Tyrus inſularis* --- *tandem pervenit ad eum ſtatum, quo hodie deprehenditur, ut in ipſa Tyro quoque Itinerator Tyrum quærat et non agnoſcat: perinde*

perinde ut res ſe habuit cum Babylone. Qui articuli imminutionis Tyri, et varia ejus fata a me ex Hiſtoria demonſtrari poſſent, ſi vere cum Marſhamo aliiſque mihi non perſuaderem, vaticinium hoc Ezechielis intelligendum eſſe de Tyro vetere, *urbe olim multò majore et potentiore, quam fuit* Tyrus nova inſularis, *licet ea ipſi accenſita fuerit; quæ Tyrus inſularis poſt hoc tempus ſola culta eſt, et gloriam Tyri veteris ſuſtinuit:---dum altera pars ejus, hoc eſt,* Tyrus vetus, *plane ſubverteretur, numquam* reædificanda, *ab Alexandro dein plane diruta, qui ruderibus lapidibuſque ejus uſus eſt in Tyro inſulari oppugnanda; ut adeò hodieque ejus* Palætyri *nihil amplius ſuperſit, nec locus niſi ad ſigna Veterum Geographorum, eaque non ſatis certa, demonſtrari poſſit.* Vitringa *ad* Iſai. xxiii. p. 703. See alſo *Prideaux* Connect.

The city of Tyre, ſtanding in the ſea upon a peninſula, promiſes at a diſtance ſomething very magnificent. But when you come to it, you find no ſimilitude of that

glory for which it was ſo renowned in ancient times. On the north ſide it has an old Turkiſh ungarriſoned caſtle; beſides which you ſee nothing here, but a mere Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, etc, there being not ſo much as one entire houſe left. Its preſent inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themſelves in the vaults, and ſubſiſting chiefly upon fiſhing; who ſeem to be preſerved in this place by Divine Providence, as a viſible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, That it ſhould be as the top of a rock, a place for fiſhers to dry their nets on. *Maundrel's* Journey, p. 48.

In *Geneſis* xvi. The Angel ſaid to Hagar --- *Thou ſhalt bear a ſon, and ſhalt call his name Iſhmael; --- And he will be a wild man* [as ſavage as a wild Aſs] *his hand will be againſt every man, and every man's hand againſt him: and he ſhall dwell in the preſence of all his brethren.*

Iſhmael was the father of the Arabs, who are, and ever have been, ſuch as

Iſhmael is here deſcribed, robbers, freebooters, and independent vagabonds.

In the ſame book, ch. xxvii, Iſaac ſays to his ſon Eſau, *by thy ſword ſhalt thou live.* Eſau was the father of the Idumæans, who were always a warlike people, ravaging their neighbours, and of a reſtleſs diſpoſition. Such they were in the days of Joſephus, who gives them this character: Θορυβῶδες καὶ ἄτακτον ἔθνος, ἀεί τε μετέωρον πρὸς τὰ κινήματα, καὶ μεταβολαῖς χαῖρον, πρὸς ὀλίγην δὲ κολακείαν τῶν δεομένων, τὰ ὅπλα κινοῦν, καὶ καθάπερ εἰς ἑορτὴν, εἰς τὰς παρατάξεις ἐπειγόμενον. *Turbarum avida, et incondita gens, ſemperque ad motus ſuſpenſa, mutationibus gaudens, minimis petentium blanditiis arma movens, et in prælia feſtinans, quaſi ad feſtum.* B. J. iv. 4.

The moſt extraordinary perſon who ever appeared amongſt the Jews was Chriſt, who without human means, and with a few poor diſciples, brought about a greater change, and accompliſhed a greater undertaking, than any Jew ever conceived and attempted.

If he was the Meſſias, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the Prophets, who ſo accurately and undeniably foretold the things relating to Babylon, Tyre, etc, would give ſome indications of this ſacred perſon, which was of more importance to the Jews and to mankind; and conſequently it is reaſonable to think that we rightly underſtand in general the prophecies which are applied to him. If he falſely aſſumed the character which he took, yet ſince he had the art and the ſucceſs to make many of the Jews, and a great part of the Gentile world believe in him, it was to be expected that ſome caution would have been given in the prophetic writings to the Jews, that they might not be miſled by him, nor expect any prophet after Malachi.

Paſſages in the Old Teſtament which have been applied to him, are of four ſorts.

I. Accommodations:

II. Direct prophecies:

III. Types:

IV. Prophecies of double ſenſes.

I. Accommodations are paſſages of the Old Teſtament, which are adapted by the writers of the New to ſomething that happened in their time, becauſe of ſome correſpondence and ſimilitude. Theſe are no prophecies, though they be ſaid ſometimes to be *fulfilled*; for any thing may be ſaid to be *fulfilled*, when it can be pertinently applied. For example, St. Matthew ſays; *All theſe things ſpake Jeſus unto the multitude in parables, that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by the prophet, ſaying, I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things which have been kept ſecret from the foundation of the world.* The meaning is apparently no more than this, that what the Pſalmiſt ſaid of his way of teaching, might juſtly be ſaid of thoſe diſcourſes of Chriſt.

Thus the Apoſtles frequently allude to the ſacred books; and thus Pagan writers often cite paſſages from their old poets, to deſcribe things [h] of which thoſe poets never thought; and this is no fault, but rather a beauty in writing; and a paſſage applied juſtly, and in a new ſenſe, is ever pleaſing to an ingenious reader, who loves to be agreeably ſurpriſed, and to ſee a likeneſs and pertinency where he expected none. He has that ſurpriſe which the Latin Poet ſo poetically gives to the tree;

Miraturque novas frondes et non ſua poma.

II. Direct prophecies are thoſe which relate to Chriſt and the Goſpel, and to them alone, and which cannot be taken in any other ſenſe. Upon theſe we ought principally to inſiſt, when we would prove the truth of our religion from the predictions of the Old Teſtament; and of theſe there is a conſiderable number. Such are thoſe which mention the calling of the Gentiles, the everlaſting kingdom of the Son of man, to be erected during the time of the Roman empire, and the ſecond covenant. Such is the cxth Pſalm; *The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footſtool. etc.* This is as plain as a prophetic deſcription ought to be; it is applicable to Chriſt alone, and it ſets forth his exaltation, his royal dignity, his prieſtly office, the propagation of his Goſpel, the obedience of his ſubjects, the deſtruction of his enemies, and of the Roman Emperors who perſecuted his Church. But of this prophecy ſomething more ſhall be ſaid, when we come to the reign of Conſtantine.

---

[h] Diogenes the Cynic was remarkable for this ſort of wit, and many of his applications, or parodies of Homer are very happy and ingenious.

III. A type is a rough draught, a leſs accurate pattern or model, from which a more perfect image or work is made. Types, or typical prophecies, are things which happened and were done in ancient time, and are recorded in the Old Teſtament, and which are found afterwards to deſcribe or repreſent ſomething which befel our Lord, and which relates to him and to his Goſpel. For example: Under the Law, a lamb was offered for a ſin-offering, and thus an attonement was made for tranſgreſſions. John the Baptiſt calls Chriſt *the lamb of God who taketh away the ſins of the world*, and St. Peter tells Chriſtians that they are redeemed *by the blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb.* Hence we infer and conclude that the lamb was a type of Chriſt; and upon conſidering it, we find that it has all that can be required to conſtitute a type; for it is in many reſpects a very juſt and lively repreſentation of Chriſt. The lamb died for no offence of his own, but for the ſins of others; ſo did Chriſt: the lamb could not commit ſin by his nature, nor Chriſt by his perfection: the lamb was without bodily ſpot or blemiſh; Chriſt was holy and undefiled: a lamb is meek and patient; ſuch was the afflicted and much injured Son of God.

Theſe types are uſeful to perſons who have already received Chriſtianity upon other and ſtronger evidence, as they ſhew the beautiful harmony and correſpondence between the Old and New Teſtament;

but they ſeem not proper proofs to ſatisfy and convince doubters, who will ſay perhaps, with the ſchool-men, *Theologia ſymbolica non eſt argumentativa.*

Unleſs we have the authority of the Scriptures of the New Teſtament for it, we cannot conclude with certainty that this or that perſon, or this or that thing mentioned in the Old Teſtament is a type of Chriſt, on account of the reſemblance which we may perceive between them: but we may admit it as probable.

Joſeph was a Nazarene, as the word may denote a ſeparate perſon. And though he were not under a Nazarite's vow, yet as he was ſeparate from his brethren, he is called[i] Nazir, *a* Nazarite, *in the more general and lax ſignification of the word. And there is a very ſingular correſpondence between him and Jeſus. Joſeph was the beloved ſon of his father; and ſo is Jeſus too. But as he was hated by his brethren; ſo Jeſus came* to his own, and his own received him not. *If the ſun, moon, and ſtars did, in a figure, obeiſance to Joſeph; they did*

---

[i] Gen. xlix. 26.

did it to Jeſus without a trope. Come let let us kill him, was the language of the brethren both of Joſeph and of Jeſus. --- They were both ſold for pieces of money; both became ſervants. The bloody coat of Joſeph anſwers to the blood of Jeſus. They were both forced down into Ægypt; both were numbered with tranſgreſſors. *Joſeph is impriſoned with Pharao's Butler and Baker; one of them is ſaved, the other deſtroyed: Jeſus ſuffers with two Thieves; and one of them is ſaved alſo. Joſeph ſold corn, and ſaves his people; ſo does Jeſus, the multiplier of loaves, and the* Bread of life. *If Joſeph exhort his brethren to peace, ſo did Jeſus. If they bowed the knee to Joſeph,* every knee muſt bow to *Jeſus. If Joſeph were highly exalted upon his ſufferings, ſo was Jeſus. They were both* men of ſorrow, *both* fruitful branches, *both lifted up from a low and ſorrowful condition.*

Sampſon was a Nazarite, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, and a perpetual one, and a type of the Meſſias too, as the Jews intimate in their two Targums upon Gen. xlix. 18. *A very fit*

fit type he was of Jeſus Chriſt. He was ſo in his very birth: he was the ſon of a barren woman; Jeſus of a Virgin. The tidings of the birth of Sampſon were brought to his mother by an Angel; as was that of the birth of Jeſus. He ſhall be a Nazarite, *ſays the Angel, of Sampſon; and of Jeſus it is ſaid that he dwelt in* Nazareth, *that it might be fulfilled which was ſaid by the Prophets, he ſhall be called a* Nazarene. *Of Sampſon the Angel foretells that he ſhould deliver Iſrael; and the Angel tells of Jeſus, that he ſhould ſave his people. An Angel was ſent to ſatisfy both Manoah, and Joſeph. If the Spirit of God be ſaid to move Sampſon; that Spirit deſcended upon Jeſus, and led him into the wilderneſs. If Sampſon marries a Philiſtine woman, Jeſus eſpouſed the Gentiles. Sampſon killed the Lion, deſtroyed the Philiſtines, removed the Gates of the city, and at his death gave the greateſt blow to his enemies: but it is Jeſus Chriſt that overcame the Devil, and the the World, and got the conqueſt of Death and Hell, that deſtroyed the Devil by his Death, and that raiſed himſelf up from death to* *life.* Kidder's *Demonſtr.* of the *Meſſias,* ch. iii.

IV. There are prophecies of double ſenſes, which admit no more than two ſenſes, which are nearly of the ſame kind with typical prophecies, and many of which might perhaps be cleared up by obſerving that the prophet meant one thing, and the Spirit of God, who ſpake by him, meant another thing; for the holy Spirit ſo over-ruled the prophets as to make them uſe words which ſtrictly and rigidly interpreted could not mean what themſelves intended.

Somewhat of this kind is the prophecy of the high prieſt Caiaphas; for the Spirit of God has ſometimes ſpoken by bad men. When the chief prieſts and Phariſees conſulted what they ſhould do with Jeſus, the high prieſt ſaid, *Ye know nothing at all, nor conſider that it is expedient for us that one man ſhould die for the people, and that the whole nation periſh not.* His meaning was plainly this, that it mattered not whether Chriſt were guilty or innocent, becauſe the public ſafety abſolutely required his death. *And this ſpake he*, ſays St. John, *not of himſelf; but, being high prieſt that year, he propheſied that Jeſus ſhould die for that nation*, that is, be a ſacrifice and attonement for their ſins. He propheſied then, and knew it not; for he had himſelf another intent and meaning.

As Daniel, xii. 8, 9. ſays that he knew not the meaning of the prediction which he delivered, ſo the Gentiles, if we may be permitted to introduce them upon this occaſion, have remarked concerning their prophets, that they knew not the import of their own prophecies, or rather that they were merely paſſive, and knew not even that they were ſpeaking. λέγουσι μὲν πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ, ἴσασι δὲ οὐδὲν ὧν λέγουσι, ſays Socrates, in Plato's *Apol.* and in *Menon.* p. 99. *Ed. Steph.* The Sibyl alſo ſays, or is made to ſay, concerning herſelf, L. ii.

— οὔτε γὰρ οἶδα
Ὅττι λέγω, κέλεται δὲ Θεός [με] ἕκαστ' ἀγορεύειν.

which is very like the words cited from

Plato. Tacitus, *Annal.* ii. 54. *Tunc* [*ſacerdos*] *hauſtâ fontis arcani aquâ, ignarus plerumque literarum et carminum, edit reſponſa verſibus,* etc.

When the Prophets of God ſpake in his name, they talked and acted like men who knew that they were propheſying. In ſome of the Pagan Oracles, the God is ſuppoſed to uſe the organs of the man, and the man is ſuppoſed to know nothing of the diſcourſe. This appears to have been the caſe of ſome Dæmoniacs in the New Teſtament, in whom the evil Spirit was the ſpeaker. The Pagan prophets therefore either were, or pretended to be out of their ſenſes; and by this argument ſome ſly or credulous people impoſed upon Juſtin Martyr (if he wrote the *Cohortatio)* and made an excuſe for the nonſenſe and the faults againſt metre in the Sibylline Oracles. The Sibyl, ſaid they, uttered verſes when ſhe was inſpired; when the inſpiration ceaſed, ſhe remembered nothing that ſhe had ſaid. They who attended her and wrote down her prophecies, being often unſkilful and illiterate people, made frequent miſtakes, and gave us lame verſes and falſe quantities. *Cohort. ad Græc.* 38. See what is ſaid above, p. 18. See alſo Smith *on Prophecy*, who has collected paſſages from Plato and others, to ſhew that the Pagan prophets were in a ſort of phrenſy and *delirium.* *ch.* iv.

This is the very ſame excuſe which the Pagans made for the bad ſtyle and other defects of their Oracles. Van Dale *De Orac.* p. 162.

Since no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, *that is, the meaning of prophecies is not what perhaps the prophet himſelf might imagine in his private judgment of the ſtate of things then preſent, but* holy men ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt; *there may therefore very poſſibly, and very reaſonably be ſuppoſed to be many prophecies, which, though they may have a prior and immediate reference to ſome nearer event, yet by the Spirit of God (whom thoſe prophecies which* *are expreſs, ſhew to have had a further view) may have been directed to be uttered in ſuch words, as may even more properly and more juſtly be applied to the great event which Providence had in view, than to the intermediate event which God deſigned only as a pledge or earneſt of the other.* etc. Clarke's *Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Rel.*

Of *omens,* to which Pagan ſuperſtition paid great regard from the time of Homer, there were ſeveral, where the words of the omen had one ſenſe, and the event, as they ſay, verified it in another ſenſe. Here is a remarkable inſtance: *Cæcilia Metelli, dum ſororis filiæ, adultæ ætatis virgini, more priſco, nocte concubia, nuptialia petit, omen ipſa fecit. Nam cum in ſacello quodam, ejus rei gratia aliquamdiu perſediſſet, nec ulla vox propoſito congruens eſſet audita; feſſa longa ſtandi mora puella rogavit materteram, ut ſibi pauliſper locum reſidendi accommodaret; cui illa,* Ego vero, *inquit,* tibi mea ſede cedo. *Quod dictum ab indulgentia profectum, ad certi ominis proceſſit eventum: quoniam Metellus non*

non ita multo poſt, mortua Cæcilia, virginem de qua loquor, in matrimonium duxit. Val. Maximus, i. v. 4. The ſame ſtory is related by Cicero, *de Divin.* i. 46. Plutarch, in the life of Alexander, ſays: Βουλόμενος δὲ τῷ Θεῷ χρήσασθαι περὶ τῆς στρατείας, ἦλθεν εἰς Δελφούς· καὶ κατὰ τύχην ἡμερῶν ἀποφράδων οὐσῶν, ἐν αἷς οὐ νενόμισται θεμιστεύειν, πρῶτον μὲν ἔπεμπεν παρακαλῶν τὴν πρόμαντιν· ὡς δὲ ἀρνουμένης καὶ προϊσχομένης τὸν νομὸν, αὐτὸς ἀναβὰς βίᾳ πρὸς τὸν ναὸν εἷλκεν αὐτήν. ἡ δὲ, ὥσπερ ἐξηττημένη τῆς σπουδῆς, εἶπεν, Ἀνίκητος εἶ, ὦ παῖ. τοῦτο ἀκούσας Ἀλέξανδρος, οὐκ ἔτι ἔφη χρῄζειν ἑτέρου μαντεύματος, ἀλλὰ ἔχειν ὃν ἐβούλετο παρ' αὐτῆς χρησμόν. *Delphos ad Deum de bello conſulendum profectus, quod forte dies nefaſti eſſent, quibus non erat ſolenne oracula edere, primo miſit certos, qui vatem orarent ut veniret. Recuſante illa, et legem cauſſante, aſcendit ipſe, et vi traxit eam ad templum. Quæ illius contentione expugnata ait,* Invictus es, fili. *Id audiens Alexander, negavit ſe alias ſortes quærere, ſed jam habere quod petierat ab ea oraculum.*

If the words of Caiaphas will admit two ſenſes, it follows not that they will admit ten, or as many as the teeming imagination of a fanatic can ſuggeſt; and prophecies of double ſenſes, if ſuch prophecies there be, may have meanings as determinate and fixed, as if they had only one ſenſe. The ſame is true of allegorical writings. Horace *Carm.* I. xiv. ſays,

O navis, referent in mare te novi, etc.

The Commentators on this poem are divided; one part contend for the literal ſenſe, and the other for the allegorical: but the ode has a double ſenſe. The Poet addreſſes himſelf to a real ſhip, and yet intended, under that image or emblem, to diſſuade the Romans from expoſing themſelves again to a civil war. This will remove ſome difficulties raiſed by writers on both ſides of the queſtion.

Mr. Warburton made the ſame remark, and to him I reſign it, as unto the firſt occupier, unleſs he will let me claim a part of it upon the privilege of friendſhip, and as κοινὰ τὰ τ͂ φίλων. Indeed the interpretation is ſo unforced and obvious, that I wonder it came not into the mind of many perſons.

Moſes ſaid of the Paſchal lamb, *Neither ſhall ye break a bone thereof.* St. John ſays that this was fulfilled in Chriſt; whence it has been not unreaſonably inferred, that thoſe words had, with the moſt obvious ſenſe, a prophetical, that is, a double ſenſe.

David ſeems to ſpeak concerning himſelf when he ſays, *Thou ſhalt not leave my ſoul in hell, nor ſuffer thy holy one to ſee corruption.* He intended perhaps no more than this, Thou ſhalt not ſuffer me to come to an untimely end, to be killed by mine enemies and caſt into the grave: but then the divine impulſe which was upon him, made him uſe words which ſhould ſuit exactly to Chriſt, and to himſelf only in a looſe and figurative ſenſe. Of this the prophet himſelf might be ſenſible, and might know that his words had another import, and that they ſhould be fulfilled twice, both in the ſenſe which he intended, and in the ſublimer ſenſe of the holy Spirit. By theſe means a ſhade was caſt over the prophecy, and the ſenſe of the Spirit was concealed till the event unfolded it and made it conſpicuous; which obſcurity ſeems to have been ſometimes neceſſary, that the [i] perſons concerned in bringing about the accompliſhment might not know what was predicted concerning them and their actions.

In *Deuteronomy* xviii. 18, 19. it is ſaid; *I will raiſe them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he ſhall ſpeak unto them all that I ſhall command*

---

[i] It is proper that men ſhould be treated as free agents: and men are free; at leaſt, they think ſo, and few of them will give up this perſuaſion, and ſuffer themſelves to be quibbled out of their ſenſes and experience. Truth and general utility will be found always to coincide; and one would be glad to know what uſeful purpoſes can be ſerved from the doctrine of fataliſm. The fataliſt will ſay; It will make a man humble. It is as likely to make him a mathematician, or a poet.

mand him. And it ſhall come to paſs, that whoſoever will not hearken unto my words which he ſhall ſpeak in my name, I will require it of him. And ℣ 15. *The Lord thy God will raiſe up unto thee a Prophet in the midſt of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye ſhall hearken.*

1. The intention of Moſes ſeems to have been to adminiſter ſome conſolation to the people who would ſoon be deprived of him, and in him, of the beſt friend and ruler, that any nation ever enjoyed. Therefore he took occaſion to aſſure them that they ſhould not be deſtitute of a prophet, and that God would, in compaſſion and kindneſs to them, ſupply the loſs which they would ſuſtain by the death of their deliverer and conductor.

2. When the Law was delivered with dreadful pomp, and the voice of God was heard, and his majeſty appeared in formidable ſplendor, the people were extremely terrified; for it was an opinion common both amongſt Jews and Pagans that no man could ſafely approach the

Deity, and that death, or ſome great evil, was the conſequence of beholding him. See Le Clerc on *Gen.* xvi. 13. Therefore they beſought Moſes to intreat for them that they might no more be brought into ſuch danger. For this reaſon, and to calm their fears, Moſes aſſured them that for the time to come God would ſpeak to them not in perſon, but by a Mediator, by a prophet, by a man like themſelves. *The Lord thy God*, ſays he, *will raiſe up unto thee a Prophet --- according to all that thou deſiredſt of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the aſſembly, ſaying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me ſee this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord ſaid unto me, They have well ſpoken that which they have ſpoken: I will raiſe them up a prophet.*

3. The Pagan nations had their Gods, their Oracles, their ſoothſayers and magicians, and there was great danger leſt the people of Iſrael ſhould go and conſult them, and ſo fall into idolatry; and in fact all theſe iniquities enſued in following

times. That nothing might be wanting to guard againſt this corruption, and that the tranſgreſſors might be inexcuſable, God poſitively forbad them to go after the gods, the prieſts, and the prophets of other nations, and promiſed them that they ſhould never want a prophet of their own. Thus after the death of Moſes, they had Joſhua, and Samuel, and Elijah, and Eliſha, and other illuſtrious men, beſides the high prieſt by whom they uſed to conſult God upon all important occaſions. This interpretation is favoured by the context. *There ſhall not be found among you one that uſeth divination, or an obſerver of times, or an enchanter, or a charmer, or a conſulter with familiar ſpirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer ---For theſe nations which thou ſhalt poſſeſs, hearkened unto obſervers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not ſuffered thee to do ſo. The Lord thy God will raiſe up unto thee a prophet from the midſt of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye ſhall hearken. --- I will raiſe them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like* *unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he ſhall ſpeak unto them all that I ſhall command him. And it ſhall come to paſs that whoſoever will not hearken unto my words which he ſhall ſpeak in my name, I will require it of him.*

Some underſtand this of a ſucceſſion of prophets in general, and more particularly of the Meſſias, who of all the prophets reſembled Moſes the moſt.

Others think that the Meſſias alone is here foretold, ſince the words in a ſtrict and accurate ſenſe repreſent him alone.

Each of theſe interpretations has had learned defenders;

magno ſe judice quæque tuetur.

But I obſerve

1. Both theſe interpretations agree in this, that Chriſt is here promiſed and foretold, nor indeed is the firſt very diſcordant from the ſecond; for if Moſes meant in general every prophet, and any prophet who ſhould ſucceed him, the Meſſias cannot

not be excluded, and if the Meſſias reſembles Moſes in a particular manner, the prophecy points him out above all the reſt.

2. St. Stephen and St. Peter ſay that Jeſus Chriſt is the prophet foretold by Moſes, and Chriſt himſelf had probably this paſſage in view, when he ſaid, *If ye had believed Moſes, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me.*

3. Though Moſes might perhaps mean a ſucceſſion of prophets, yet the Spirit of God, who was then upon him, guided him to uſe words which ſhould deſcribe the Meſſias much better than any other prophet. The other prophets were only ſo far like unto Moſes that they were prophets, but in many reſpects they were not like him. In the laſt chapter of Deuteronomy, there is an addition which was made to the Books of Moſes, long after his death, by ſome prophet probably, who inſerts the following remark; *And there aroſe not a prophet ſince in Iſrael like unto Moſes:* which has a manifeſt reference to

the prophecy of which we are treating, and may be thus underſtood; Although Moſes ſaid that the Lord would raiſe up one like unto him, yet this prophecy has not yet been accompliſhed in a ſtrict and full ſenſe: there has not yet ariſen one like unto him; but this great prophet is ſtill to come.

This laſt chapter of Deuteronomy ſeems to have been compoſed by two authors, and at two different times; the firſt part down to the ninth verſe ſoon after the death of Moſes, the three laſt verſes long afterwards.

Add to this, that the reſemblance between Moſes and Chriſt is ſo very great and ſtriking, that it is impoſſible to conſider it fairly and carefully, without ſeeing and acknowledging that he muſt be foretold where he is ſo well deſcribed.

Ammonius wrote a book commended by Euſebius and Jerom, Περὶ τῆς Μωϋσέως ϗ Ἰησοῦ Συμφωνίας, *De conſenſu Moſis ac Jeſu*, which is not extant. *Euſeb.* E. H.

vi. 19. Whether this treatiſe was deſigned to ſhew the reſemblance and agreement between the perſons, or between their doctrines, we cannot ſay: perhaps it was the latter.

Euſebius has treated the ſubject, on which I am entering, in his *Demonſtratio Evangelica*, L. iii. p. 90, etc. *Ed. Paris.* 1628. but as he was haſtening to other points, he has not diſcuſſed this ſo fully as to diſcourage thoſe who ſhould be inclined to attempt the ſame thing. I ſhall therefore endeavour to make ſeveral improvements upon his remarks, and additions to them.

1. Firſt, and which is the principal of all, Moſes was a lawgiver, and the mediator of a covenant between God and man: ſo was Chriſt. Here the reſemblance is the more conſiderable, becauſe no other prophet beſides them executed this high office.

The other prophets were only interpreters and enforcers of the Law, and in this were greatly inferior to Moſes. The Meſſias could not be like unto Moſes in a ſtrict ſenſe, unleſs he were a legiſlator[k]. He muſt give a law to men, and conſequently a more excellent law, and a better covenant than the firſt; for if the firſt had been perfect, as the author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews argues, there could have been no room for a ſecond.

2. Other prophets had revelations in dreams and viſions, but Moſes talked with God, with the Λόγος, face to face: ſo Chriſt ſpake that which he had ſeen with the Father.

If there be a prophet among you, ſays God to Aaron and Miriam, *I the Lord will make myſelf known unto him in a viſion, and will ſpeak unto him in a dream. My ſervant Moſes is not ſo, who is faith-*

---

[k] By this prediction Moſes guarded the people againſt the prejudice which his own authority was like to create againſt a new Lawgiver; telling them beforehand, that, when the great Prophet came, their obedience ought to be transferred to him. *Bp. Sherlock,* Diſc. ii.

ful in all my houſe; with him I ſpeak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark ſpeeches, and the ſimilitude of the Lord ſhall he behold. Num. xii.

All the prophets of the Old Teſtament ſaw viſions and dreamed dreams, all the prophets of the New were in the ſame ſtate. St. Peter had a viſion, St. John ſaw viſions, St. Paul had viſions and dreams. But Chriſt neither ſaw viſions, nor dreamed a dream, but had an intimate and immediate communication with the Father, he was in the Father's boſom, and he, and no man elſe had ſeen the Father. --- Moſes and Chriſt are the only two in all the ſacred hiſtory, who had this communication with God. Bp. Sherlock *Diſc.* vi.

3. Moſes in his infancy was wonderfully preſerved from the cruelty of a tyrant, and from the deſtruction of all the male children: ſo was Chriſt.

4. Moſes fled from his country to eſcape the hands of the king: ſo did Chriſt, when his parents carried him into Ægypt.

5. Moſes refuſed to be called the ſon of Pharaoh's daughter, chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction: Chriſt had the kingdoms of the world offered him by Satan, and rejected them, and when the people would have made him a king, he hid himſelf, chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction.

6. Moſes, ſays St. Stephen, *was learned, ἐπαιδεύθη, in all the wiſdom of the Ægyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds*; and Joſephus, *Ant. Jud.* ii. 9. ſays that he was a very forward and accompliſhed youth, and had wiſdom and knowledge beyond his years, which is taken from Jewiſh tradition, and which of itſelf is highly probable: St. Luke obſerves of Chriſt, that *he increaſed* (betimes) *in wiſdom and ſtature, and in favour with God and man*, and his diſcourſes in the temple with the Doctors, when he was twelve years old, were a proof of it. The difference was that Moſes acquired his early knowledge by human inſtruction, and Chriſt by a divine *afflatus*. To both of them might be applied what Callimachus elegantly feigns of Jupiter:

Ὀξὺ δ' ἀνήϐησας, ταχινοὶ δέ τοι ἦλθον ἴουλοι·
Ἀλλ' ἔτι παιδνὸς ἐὼν ἐφράσσαο πάντα τέλεια.

Swift was thy growth, and early was thy bloom,
But earlier wiſdom crown'd thy infant days.

7. Moſes delivered his people from cruel oppreſſion and a heavy bondage: ſo did Chriſt from the worſe tyranny of ſin and Satan.

8. Moſes contended with the Magicians, and had the advantage over them ſo manifeſtly, that they could no longer withſtand him, but were forced to acknowledge the divine power by which he was aſſiſted: Chriſt ejected evil Spirits, and received the ſame acknowledgments from them.

9. Moſes aſſured the people whom he conducted, that if they would be obedient, they ſhould enter into the happy land of promiſe, which land was uſually underſtood by the wiſer Jews to be an emblem and a figure of that eternal and

celeſtial kingdom to which Chriſt opened an entrance.

10. Moſes reformed the nation corrupted with Ægyptian ſuperſtition and idolatry: Chriſt reſtored true religion.

11. Moſes wrought a great variety of miracles: ſo did Chriſt; and in this the parallel is remarkable, ſince beſides Chriſt *there aroſe not a prophet in Iſrael like unto Moſes, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the ſigns and the wonders which the Lord ſent him to do.*

12. Moſes was not only a law-giver, a prophet, and a worker of miracles, but a king and a prieſt. He is called a king, *Deut.* xxxiii. 5. and he had indeed, tho' not the pomp, and the crown and ſceptre, yet the authority of a king, and was the ſupreme magiſtrate; and the office of prieſt he often exerciſed: in all theſe offices the reſemblance between Moſes and Chriſt was ſingular. In the interpretation of *Deut.* xxxiii. 5. I prefer the ſenſe of Grotius and Selden to Le Clerc's. The

parallel between Moſes and Chriſt requires it, and no objection can be made to it. The Apoſtolical Conſtitutions alſo, if their judgment be of any weight, call Moſes *high prieſt and king*, τὸν ἀρχιερέα καὶ βασιλέα. vi. 3.

13. Moſes, ſays Theodoret, married an Æthiopian woman, at which his relations were much offended, and in this he was a type of Chriſt, who eſpouſed the Church of the Gentiles, whom the Jews were very unwilling to admit to the ſame favours and privileges with themſelves. But I ſhould not chuſe to lay a great ſtreſs upon this typical ſimilitude, though it is ingenious.

14. Moſes faſted in the deſert forty days and nights before he gave the Law: ſo did Elias, the reſtorer of the Law; and ſo did Chriſt before he entered into his miniſtry.

15. Moſes fed the people miraculouſly in the wilderneſs: ſo did Chriſt, with bread, and with doctrine; and the manna which deſcended from heaven, and the

loaves which Chriſt multiplied, were proper images of the ſpiritual food which the Saviour of the world beſtowed upon his diſciples.

Our fathers, ſaid the Jews, *did eat manna in the deſert forty years, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Jeſus ſaid unto them, My Father* (now) *giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me ſhall never hunger, and he that believeth in me ſhall never thirſt.* John vi.

The metaphors of hungring and thirſting after virtue and knowledge, and of eating and drinking them, and the repreſentation of benefits of any kind under the expreſſions of food and drink, have been common in all writers ſacred and profane.

St. Paul ſays to the Corinthians --- *All our fathers were under the cloud, and all* *paſſed through the ſea, and did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat, and did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink; for they drank of that ſpiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Chriſt.*

Whether the paſſage of the Iſraelites through the ſea, and under the cloud, the water iſſuing from the rock which Moſes ſmote, and the manna which deſcended from heaven, were types intended to be fulfilled in Chriſt and in the benefits and privileges of Chriſtianity, or whether the Apoſtle referred to theſe things by way of alluſion, ſimilitude, and accommodation, I determine not.

16. Moſes led the people through the ſea: Chriſt walked upon it, and enabled Peter to do ſo.

17. Moſes commanded the ſea to retire and give way: Chriſt commanded the winds and the waves to be ſtill.

18. Moſes brought darkneſs over the land: the ſun withdrew his light at Chriſt's crucifixion. And as the darkneſs which

was ſpread over Ægypt was followed by the deſtruction of [1] their firſt born, and of Pharaoh and his hoſt; ſo the darkneſs at Chriſt's death was the forerunner of the deſtruction of the Jews, when, in the metaphorical and prophetic ſtyle, and according to Chriſt's expreſs prediction,

---

[1] Mr. Waſſe had a conjecture, that the untimely death of Pharaoh's firſt-born ſon, who was, perhaps, better beloved than his father, gave occaſion to the Song, which the Greeks called *Linus*, and which they had from the Ægyptians: ἔστι δὲ Αἰγυπτιστὶ ὁ Λῖνος καλεόμενος Μανέρως. ἔφασαν δέ μιν Αἰγύπτιοι τοῦ πρώτου βασιλεύσαντος Αἰγύπτου παῖδα μουνογενέα γενέσθαι· ἀποθανόντα δ' αὐτὸν ἄνωρον, θρήνοισι τούτοισι ὑπ' Αἰγυπτίων τιμηθῆναι. καὶ ἀοιδήν τε ταύτην πρώτην καὶ μούνην σφίσι γενέσθαι. *Vocatur autem Linus Ægyptiace Maneros: quem Ægyptii tradiderunt, quum filius unicus extitiſſet primi Ægypti regis, prœmaturaque morte deceſſiſſet, his lamentis ab Ægyptiis fuiſſe decoratum: et cantilenam hanc primam eamque ſolam ipſos habuiſſe.* Herodotus ii. 79.

It may be obſerved, though it is a trifle, that Gronovius gives us Λῖνος circumflexed, but the firſt ſyllable is ſhort in the beſt writers, and Moſchus ſays *Epitaph. Bion.*

ΑΙΛΙΝΑ μοι στοναχεῖτε νάπαι, καὶ Δώριον ὕδωρ.

Sophocles *Ajac.* 632, Αἴλινον, αἴλινον.

the ſun was darkened and the moon withdrew her light, and the ſtars fell from heaven, the Eccleſiaſtical and Civil State of the Jews was overturned, and the rulers of both were deſtroyed.

19. The face of Moſes ſhone, when he deſcended from the mountain: the ſame happened unto Chriſt at his transfiguration on the mountain. Moſes and Elias appeared then with him, to ſhew that the Law and the Prophets bare witneſs to him; and the Divine Voice ſaid, *This is my beloved Son, hear ye him*, alluding moſt evidently to the prediction of Moſes,---*unto him ſhall ye hearken*.

20. Moſes cleanſed one leper: Chriſt many.

21. Moſes foretold the calamities which would befall the nation for their diſobedience: ſo did Chriſt.

22. Moſes choſe and appointed ſeventy elders to be over the people: Chriſt choſe ſuch a number of diſciples.

23. The Spirit which was in Moſes was conferred in ſome degree upon the ſeventy elders, and they propheſied: Chriſt conferred miraculous powers upon his ſeventy diſciples.

24 Moſes ſent twelve men to ſpy out the land which was to be conquered: Chriſt ſent his Apoſtles into the world to ſubdue it by a more glorious and miraculous conqueſt.

25. Moſes was victorious over powerful kings, and great nations: ſo was Chriſt, by the effects of his religion, and by the fall of thoſe who perſecuted his Church.

26. Moſes conquered Amalec by lifting and holding up both his hands all the day: Chriſt overcame his and our enemies when his hands were faſtened to the croſs. This reſemblance has been obſerved by ſome of the ancient Chriſtians, and ridiculed by ſome of the moderns, but without ſufficient reaſon, I think.

27. Moſes interceded for tranſgreſſors and cauſed an attonement to be made for

them, and ſtopped the wrath of God: ſo did Chriſt.

28. Moſes ratified a covenant between God and the people, by ſprinkling them with blood: Chriſt with his own blood.

29. Moſes deſired to die for the people, and prayed that God would forgive them, or blot him out of his book: Chriſt did more, he died for ſinners.

30. Moſes inſtituted the Paſſover, when a lamb was ſacrificed, none of whoſe bones were to be broken, and whoſe blood[m]

---

[m] Levit. xvii. 11. *The life of the fleſh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an attonement for your ſouls; for it is the blood that maketh an attonement for the ſoul. Therefore I ſaid unto the Children of Iſrael, No ſoul of you ſhall eat blood,* etc.

Here appears the reaſon of this ſtrict and often repeated prohibition: blood was appointed as the attonement for ſin, it was ſet apart and ſanctified for that purpoſe; and conſequently, when the uſe of the altar, and ſacrifices ceaſed, at the death of Chriſt, the prohibition of eating blood ſhould ceaſe alſo, and the precept concerning it in the Acts of the Apoſtles ſeems to have been prudential and temporary.

protected the people from deſtruction: Chriſt was that paſchal lamb.

31. Moſes lifted up the ſerpent, that they who looked upon him might be healed of their mortal wounds: Chriſt was that ſerpent. *As Moſes lifted up the ſerpent in the wilderneſs, even ſo muſt the Son of man be lifted up; that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have eternal life.*

The ſerpent being an emblem of Satan, may be thought an unfit image to repreſent Chriſt: but the ſerpents which bit the people of Iſrael are called *fiery* ſerpents, *Seraphim.* Num. xxi. 6. Now, *Sunt boni Angeli Seraphim, ſunt mali Angeli Seraphim, quos nulla figura melius quam pre-*

Of clean animals, the blood was to be ſhed and thrown away: of unclean, no part was to be eaten: of clean fiſhes, the blood ſeems to be no where expreſly forbidden, perhaps becauſe their blood was never offered up in ſacrifice.

The eating of a clean animal, that died of itſelf, is not forbidden with the ſame rigour; perhaps becauſe the blood was coagulated, and not in a condition to be offered up to God. See *Levit.* xvii. 15, and *Deut.* xiv. 21.

ſtere exprimas. Et tali uſum primum humani generis ſeductorem putat Bachai. Grotius. Therefore Chriſt, as he was the great and good Angel, the Angel of God's preſence, the Angel καθ' ἐξοχὴν, might be repreſented as a kind Seraph, a beneficent healing Serpent, who ſhould aboliſh the evil introduced by the ſeducing lying Serpent, and who like the ſerpent of Moſes ſhould deſtroy the ſerpents of the Magicians; as one of thoſe gentle ſerpents, who are friends to mankind:

Nunc quoque nec fugiunt hominem, nec vulnere lædunt,
Quidque prius fuerint, placidi meminere dracones.

Ovid. *Metam.* iv. 601.

Εἰσὶ δὲ περὶ Θήβας ἱροὶ ὄφιες, ἀνθρώπων οὐδαμῶς δηλήμονες. Herodotus ii. 74.

Poſſemus hinc, ſays Le Clerc, *incipere oſtendere ſimilitudinem Serpentis ænei, et Chriſti ipſius; nam ut nemo crediſſet ſalutiferum futurum eſſe Iſraëlitis ab cherſydris demorſis, conſpectum ænei ſerpentis: ita* *nec quiſquam poterat, eo tempore quo res contigit, ſperare hominis crucifixi cognitionem unicam fore viam, qua homines ad fidem Deo habendam, parendumque Evangelio, ex omnibus gentibus brevi adducendi eſſent. Verum hoc aliaque id genus Theologis latius diducenda atque illuſtranda relinquimus. Vide eos ad* Joan. iii. 14.

In Iſaias vi. 2. etc. the Seraphim are repreſented as praiſing God. Origen had a notion that theſe Seraphim were two, and that they were the *Son* and the *Spirit* of God, a paradox, which, though ſcarcely to be maintained, yet deſerved not the ſevere cenſures which Jerom in his wrath was pleaſed to beſtow upon it. See Vitringa. Euſebius ſays ſomething very like it, *Præp. Evang.* vii. 15. where the notes of Vigerus may be conſulted.

Æſculapius, the God of phyſic, and of all the Pagan Deities ſuppoſed to be the moſt beneficent, appeared, according to Pagan Tradition, in the form of a ſerpent, and a ſerpent was ſacred to him, and is deſcribed twiſting round his rod.

32. All the affection which Moſes ſhewed towards the people, all the cares and toils which he underwent on their account, were repaid by them with ingratitude, murmuring, and rebellion, and ſometimes they threatened to ſtone him: the ſame returns the Jews made to Chriſt for all his benefits.

33. Moſes was ill uſed by his own family; his brother and ſiſter rebelled againſt him: there was a time when Chriſt's own brethren believed not in him.

34. Moſes had a very wicked and perverſe generation committed to his care and conduct, and to enable him to rule them, miraculous powers were given to him, and he uſed his utmoſt endeavour to make the people obedient to God, and to ſave them from ruin; but in vain; in the ſpace of forty years they all fell in the wilderneſs, except two: Chriſt alſo was given to a generation not leſs wicked and perverſe, his inſtructions and his miracles were loſt upon them, and in about the

ſame ſpace of time, after they had rejected him, they were deſtroyed.

35. Moſes was very meek above all the men that were on the face of the earth: ſo was Chriſt.

36. The people could not enter into the land of promiſe till Moſes was dead: by the death of Chriſt the kingdom of heaven was open to believers.

37. In the death of Moſes and Chriſt there is alſo a reſemblance of ſome circumſtances. Moſes died, in one ſenſe, for the iniquities of the people; it was their rebellion which was the occaſion of it, which drew down the diſpleaſure of God upon them and upon him. *The Lord*, ſays Moſes to them, *was angry with me for your ſakes, ſaying, Thou ſhalt not go in thither*, but thou ſhalt die. *Deut.* i. 37. Moſes therefore went up, in the ſight of the people, to the top of mount Nebo, and there he died, when he was in perfect vigour, when *his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.* Chriſt ſuf-

fered for the ſins of men, and was led up, in the preſence of the people, to mount Calvary, where he died in the flower of his age, and when he was in his full natural ſtrength. Neither Moſes nor Chriſt, as far as we may collect from ſacred hiſtory, were ever ſick, or felt any bodily decay or infirmity, which would have rendered them unfit for the toils they underwent: their ſufferings were of another kind.

38. Moſes was buried, and no man knew where his body lay: nor could the Jews find the body of Chriſt.

39. Laſtly, as Moſes a little before his death promiſed the people that *God would raiſe them up a prophet like unto him*; ſo Chriſt, taking leave of his afflicted diſciples, told them, *I will not leave you comfortleſs, I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter.*

Is this ſimilitude and correſpondence in ſo many things between Moſes and Chriſt the effect of mere chance? Let us ſearch all the records of univerſal hiſtory, and ſee if we can find a man who was ſo like to Moſes as Chriſt was, and ſo like to Chriſt as Moſes was. If we cannot find ſuch an one, then have we found him of whom Moſes in the law, and the prophets did write, Jeſus of Nazareth, the Son of God.

But this is not all, for Moſes adds; *And it ſhall come to paſs that whoſoever will not hearken unto my words which he ſhall ſpeak in my name, I will require it of him.* The Jews rejected Chriſt, and God rejected them, and gave them up to deſtruction; and as their offence againſt the Meſſias, and their behaviour after his death, was wicked beyond meaſure and beyond example; ſo God fulfilled the prophecies of Moſes concerning them, that he would require it of them, and that he would make their plagues wonderful, would bring upon them calamities beyond meaſure and beyond example.

It may be obſerved that a perſon can be produced, who was very like to Moſes, namely, *Bacchus*, who was an Ægyptian God. Huetius, in his [n] *Demonſtratio Evangelica*, has with much accuracy and learning drawn up the compariſon, and the reſemblance is ſo great, in ſo many particulars, that it cannot be ſuppoſed accidental: but then, firſt, Bacchus is a poetical deity, and the accounts of him are taken from fabulous hiſtory; ſecondly, many of the actions of the Jewiſh Legiſlator were in all probability aſcribed to him, and he is [o] Moſes in diſguiſe: ſo the parallel ceaſes.

---

[n] A book, which has its uſe and value, but is more remarkable for erudition than for reaſoning; which made a French writer ſay of it, in the words of Terence,

— ut te, cum tua
Monſtratione, *magnus perdat Jupiter!*

[o] The Ægyptians, as Herodotus tells us ii. 42. had a ſtory concerning their God Hercules, Ἡρακλέα θελῆσαι πάντως ἰδέσθαι τὸν Δία, καὶ τὸν οὐκ ἐθέλειν ὀφθῆναι ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ· τέλος δὲ, ἐπεί τε λιπαρέειν τὸν Ἡρακλέα, τὸν Δία μηχανήσασθαι, κριὸν ἐκδείραντα προσέχεσθαί τε τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποταμόντα τοῦ κριοῦ, καὶ ἐνδύντα τὸ νάκος, οὕτω οἱ ἑωϋτὸν ἐπιδέξαι. *Quod Jupiter, quum ab Hercule eum cernere volente,*

The Oeconomy of the Jewiſh and of the Chriſtian Church is ſimilar, in many reſpects, and upon the whole, though in ſmaller occurrences the reſemblance ought not to be too much urged; for ſo any thing may be made of any thing.

The parallel between Moſes and Chriſt has been examined, in which we are authoriſed to ſeek and to expect a ſtrong reſemblance, both from the Old Teſtament, which declares that a prophet ſhould ariſe like unto Moſes, and from the New, which declares that Chriſt was that prophet. It deſerves conſideration, whether this conſequence may be deduced, that, if Moſes was a type of Chriſt, the people whom he delivered and conducted may be a type of the people to whom Chriſt

---

cerni nollet, tandem, quia orando inſtabat Hercules, hoc commentus ſit, ut, amputato arietis capite, pellique villoſa, quam illi detraxerat, induta ſibi, ita ſeſe Herculi oſtenderit.

This Hercules ſeems to have been Moſes, who ſaid to God, *I beſeech thee, ſhew me thy glory. And he ſaid, Thou canſt not ſee my face*—etc. Exod. xxxiii.

was ſent, and of the church which he eſtabliſhed.

If this ſhould be admitted as a probability (and it ſhould not be offered as any thing more than conjectural) we may ſay that the generation which fell in the wilderneſs repreſents the Jews who rejected Chriſt, and periſhed for their diſobedience.

The land of promiſe and of reſt was a ſymbol of the church of Chriſt.

The idolatry and iniquities of the Jewiſh nation are too exactly paralleled by the corruption which overſpread the Chriſtian Church.

Many other reſemblances might be pointed out which ſhall be omitted, ſince we cannot make it ſufficiently evident that they were not accidental.

The deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and that *ſecond* coming of the Son of man to take vengeance of his foes, may perhaps prefigure the deſtruction of Antichriſtian tyranny, and the manifeſtation of Chriſt, that is, of his power and ſpirit; and then may commence a better and happier Æra, and ſuch a renovation as may be called, New heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs.

The correſpondencies of types and antitypes, though they are not themſelves proper proofs of the truth of a doctrine, yet they may be very reaſonable confirmations of the foreknowledge of God; of the uniform view of Providence under different diſpenſations; of the analogy, harmony, and agreement between the Old Teſtament and the New. The words in the Law concerning one particular kind of death; He that is hanged, is accurſed of God; *can hardly be conceived to have been put in upon any other account, than with a view and foreſight of the application made of it by St. Paul. The analogies between the* Paſchal lamb, *and the* Lamb of God ſlain from the foundation of the world; *between the* Ægyptian bondage, *and the* tyranny of Sin; *between the* baptiſm of the Iſraelites in the ſea and in the cloud, *and the* baptiſm of Chriſtians; *between the* paſſage *through the* wilderneſs, *and through the* preſent world; *between* Jeſus [Joſhua] *bringing the people into the* promiſed land, *and* Jeſus Chriſt *being the*

Captain of Salvation *to believers*; *between the Sabbath of* reſt *promiſed to* the people of God *in the earthly* Canaan, *and the eternal* reſt *promiſed in the* heavenly Canaan; *between the liberty granted from the time of the* death of the High prieſt, *to him that had fled into a* city of refuge, *and the* redemption *purchaſed by the* death of Chriſt; *between the* high prieſt entering into the holy place every year with the blood of others, *and Chriſt's* once entering with his own blood into heaven itſelf, to appear in the preſence of God for us: *theſe, I ſay, and innumerable other analogies, between the* ſhadows of things to come, of good things to come, *the* ſhadows of heavenly things; *the* figures for the time then preſent, patterns of things in the heavens, *and* the heavenly things themſelves; *cannot, without the force of ſtrong prejudice, be conceived to have happened by mere chance, without any foreſight or deſign. There are no ſuch analogies, much leſs ſuch ſeries of analogies found in the books of mere enthuſiaſtic writers living in ſuch remote ages from each other. It is much more* *credible, and reaſonable to ſuppoſe, what St. Paul affirms, that* theſe things were our examples; *and that in the uniform courſe of God's government of the world,* all theſe things happened unto them of old for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. *And hence ariſes that aptneſs of ſimilitude, in the application of ſeveral legal performances to the morality of the Goſpel, that it can very hardly be ſuppoſed not to have been originally intended.* Clarke's *Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Relig.*

THE REMAINING part of this book ſhall contain remarks on the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions and Canons, the Sibylline Oracles, and ſome paſſages from ancient poets cited by the Fathers, the works of Barnabas, and of Hermas, the Recognitions of Clemens, the Epiſtle to Diognetus, the Epiſtles of Ignatius, etc.

AMONGST the ancient Chriſtian books which claim our attention are the *Apoſtolical*

Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, which, if they are genuine, are a ſacred treatiſe, and of equal authority with the New Teſtament; and if they are not genuine, are an infamous impoſture, for which the Forger well deſerved the puniſhment inflicted by the Roman Laws on the *Falſarii*. *Digeſt.* l. xlviii. *Tit.* x. 1.

The authors of them are, it is pretended, the twelve Apoſtles and St. Paul gathered together, with Clemens their *amanuenſis*.

If their authority ſhould appear only ambiguous, it would be our duty to reject them, leſt we ſhould adopt as divine doctrines *the commandments of men*; for ſince each Goſpel contains the main parts of Chriſtianity, and might be ſufficient *to make men wiſe unto ſalvation*, there is leſs danger in diminiſhing than in enlarging the number of Canonical books, and leſs evil would have enſued from the loſs of one of the four Goſpels, than from the addition of a fifth and ſpurious one.

But the Conſtitutions are a medley of old treatiſes jumbled together, enlarged, and adulterated without much wit or judgment by ſome Compiler after the days of Conſtantine.

And yet they have their value, and may be uſeful on many accounts, and contain ſeveral things of antiquity relating to the doctrine and diſcipline of the Church, and extracts from old Liturgies, though the whole be ſo blended with inſertions of a later date, that it is now beyond human ſkill to make the ſeparation with any certainty.

I offered ſome remarks upon them in *Diſc.* vi. on the *Chriſt. Rel.* and I ſhall here add a few more.

They have a Chapter Περὶ Χαρισμάτων, in which they obſerve that the word Χάρισμα means either the gift of working miracles, or the gift of ſpiritual and Chriſtian graces; that the firſt is conferred on ſome, the ſecond on all true Chriſtians; and that miraculous powers are not ſo much for the uſe of Chriſtians, as for the ſake and for the conviction of unbelievers. viii. 1. Baptiſm alſo and the Lord's Supper are ſometimes called Χαρίσματα. Ignatius ſaw Polycarp at Smyrna — *καὶ πνευματικῶν αὐτῷ κοινωνήσας χαρισμάτων — et quum eum ſpiritualium chariſmatum participem feciſſet* — Martyr. Ignat. § iii. *Πνευματικὰ χαρίσματα videntur hic ſignificare ſymbola euchariſtica. Certe baptiſma non raro apud veteres vocatur χάρισμα.* Clericus.

In the form for the ordination of Pfeſbyters, they pray that the Preſbyter may have the *gift* of *healing* conferred upon him — *ὅπως πλησθεὶς ἐνεργημάτων ἰατικῶν, καὶ λόγου διδακτικοῦ, ἐν πρᾳότητι παιδεύῃ σου τὸν λαόν. — ut repletus operationibus vim ſanandi habentibus, ac ſermone ad docendum apto, erudiat cum manſuetudine populum tuum.* viii. 16. Taken, I ſuppoſe, from 1 *Cor.* xii. 9. *ἄλλῳ δὲ χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων.*

They introduce the Apoſtles, one or all, ſometimes ſpeaking and commanding in their own names, and ſometimes citing the New Teſtament as we now cite it.

This ſingle obſervation is ſufficient to overſet the Book. Jeſus Chriſt, ſay they, began to *do* before he began to *teach*, ὡς ποῦ λέγει ὁ Λουκᾶς· Ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν ϗ διδάσκειν. *This is wanting in one of the MSS.* ſays Le Clerc, *and ſeems to have been ſtruck out by ſome Critic, who thought it wrong to introduce the Apoſtles citing the teſtimony of Luke.* But it ſignified nothing to ſtrike out one paſſage, whilſt five hundred of the ſame kind were left. Beſides, it was all in vain, becauſe though the citation here were taken away, the alluſion to it would remain, ii. 6.

They repeat it over and over, leſt Chriſtians ſhould chance to forget it, that a Biſhop is a God, a God upon earth, and a King, and infinitely ſuperior to a king, and ruling over rulers and kings. They command Chriſtians to give him tribute as to a king, and to reverence him as a God, and to pay him tithes and firſt-fruits, according, ſay they, to God's command; and they ſtrictly forbid Chriſtians to make any enquiry, and to take any notice, whether he diſpoſes of theſe revenues well or ill, ii. 11. 26. 35. *et paſſim:* which ſeems to have been drawn up at a time when there were Chriſtian Emperors. Here is ſtrange language indeed! even far beyond all *Eminencies* and *Holineſſes.*

Le Clerc had a ſuſpicion that Leontius, an Arian Biſhop of the fourth century, was the inventor, or the interpolator of the Conſtitutions. Le Clerc received the hint from *Thomas Bruno,* who was a learned and ingenious man, and a Canon of Windſor in the days of Charles II. The learned Iſaac Voſſius, who alſo was Canon of Windſor, dedicated to him his Book *de Sibyllinis Oraculis.* Bruno conjectured that Leontius might be the Collector of the greater part of the *Apoſtolical Canons,* and ſays many things in favour of Leontius. Speaking of the religious controverſies in the time of Conſtantius, which were not very edifying, he ſays; *Et certe præter unum Athanaſium inter orthodoxos, et Leontium inter Arianos, vix ullos reperia.*

rias homines quadratos, dictis, factis, formulis ſuis Fidei ſtantes; ſed potius verſipelles, chamæleontes, nunc in hanc, nunc in illam partem paratos, prout ferebat animus τῶν παραδυναστευόντων apud Imperatorem; qui vel eunuchos Imperatorios opibus eccleſiæ et nummis, vel mulierculas ἐν γυναικωνίτιδι ſermonum lenociniis et blanditiis pelliciebant in partes ſuas, omniaque pro libitu ſuo agebant, ferebant, cæteris majore ex parte, more pecudum, non qua eundum erat, ſed qua ibatur, proſpicientibus. etc. Judic. de Canon. in the ſecond Vol. of the *Patres Apoſtolici.*

It is certain that Leontius carried his head high enough. He reprimanded the Emperor Conſtantius for meddling in Eccleſiaſtical affairs, and ſent word to the Empreſs Euſebia, who is ſaid to have been haughty, that he would not comply with her requeſt, and pay her a viſit, unleſs ſhe would promiſe to bow down before him and receive his bleſſing, and then to ſtand up, whilſt he ſat, till he ſhould give her leave to ſit down; which put the Lady into a violent rage. See Tillemont *Hiſt. des Emp.* iii. 381. or Le Clerc *Diſſert. de Conſtit.* in the *Patr. Apoſt.*

I know not whether Leontius learned from the Jews to take this ſtate upon him. Their Rabbins ſay that the High-prieſt never went to court, but when he had a mind, and that then he ſat before the King, and the King ſtood up in his preſence. See Baſnage *Hiſt. des Juifs*, i. 4.

It is, I believe, labour loſt to enquire who the Compiler was: we can only ſay of this pretended Clemens, that he was long-lived; and if any one ſhould ever compile a book *de Macrobiis*, or *de Incredibilibus*, like thoſe of *Phlegon* and *Palæphatus*, he ought to take notice of our Author, for he flouriſhed in the firſt, ſecond, third, and fourth centuries. It is no wonder therefore if his memory failed him ſometimes, and if he fell into ſome ſmall miſtakes. But there have been two men, ſince the Chriſtian Æra, who in length of days greatly ſurpaſſed him; *Joſephus Ben Gorion*, who, according to his own chronology, lived to be a thouſand years old, and the *Wandering Jew*, who was ſeen by an Armenian Biſhop five hundred years ago, and is ſuppoſed to be ſtill alive, and purſuing his travels.

The Conſtitutions confirm many frivolous precepts by texts of Scripture which in theſe critical days would be thought inconcluſive. For example; A Vintner's money muſt not be accepted by the Biſhop. Why? Becauſe Iſaias, i. 22. according to the LXX, ſays, *Thy vintners mix wine with water.* iv. 6. But it would be endleſs to produce their miſinterpreted and miſapplied citations of Scripture, both Canonical, and Apocryphal.

The antiquity of *Solomon's Song* is ſufficiently eſtabliſhed by the Hebrew original, and by the verſion of the LXX, and it is mentioned in the LXXVIth Apoſtolical Canon. It has been obſerved that it is never cited in the New Teſtament. It is mentioned as a book of the old Teſtament by Melito, in Euſebius E. H. iv. 26.

26. and Hippolytus and Origen wrote commentaries upon it: whether any Chriſtian before them has cited it, I know not. A Writer, whom I need not mention, is for uncanonizing it, but there is nothing new under the ſun; Theodorus Mopſueſtenus was of the ſame mind, who lived in the fourth and fifth centuries, and was a learned Biſhop, a bold critic, and an enemy to allegorical interpretations. Leontius of Jeruſalem finds great fault with him; and ſays,— *Imo et ſanctorum ſanctiſſimum Canticum canticorum ab omnibus divinarum rerum peritis et ab omnibus Eccleſiis cuncti orbis notum, et a Judæis inimicis crucis Chriſti in admiratione habitum, libidinoſe pro ſua et mente et lingua meretricia interpretrans, ſua ſupra modum incredibili audacia ex libris ſacris abſcidit.* It ſeems, Theodorus took the *Spouſe* in that book to be one of Solomon's queens. See Fabricius *Bibl. Gr.* ix. 159.

This Theodorus, and Origen, are looked upon as the fathers of a doctrine, which in the fifth century was called Pelagianiſm, or

Semi-Pelagianiſm. Cardinal Noris charges them with it in his *Hiſtoria Pelagiana*; and I verily believe that he does them no great wrong; and that they had notions entirely different from thoſe of Auguſtin, and of Janſenius, about predeſtination, and that the arguments of the Biſhop of Hippo, or of the Biſhop of Ypres, would have converted neither the one nor the other.

The Anti-Janſeniſts of the Church of Rome condemn the predeſtinarian doctrines of Luther, and Calvin, and Janſenius, but excuſe Auguſtin, and pretend to agree with this Latin Father, whilſt they plainly reject his notions. They are not ſo ingenuous as the Monk, who being preſſed with an argument taken from St. Paul, replied, that *St. Paul might as well have refrained from ſaying ſome things which ſmelt of the fagot.*

Chardin tells us that the ſublimeſt and beſt eſteemed poetry among the Perſians is that which ſets out religious ſubjects in the phraſe of libertines. Whether this be applicable to Solomon's Song, I will not take upon me to determine. There are alſo many paſſages in the Old, and ſome in the New Teſtament, where things ſpiritual are couched under phraſes, which the reſerved modeſty of modern language will hardly permit us to illuſtrate.

The Conſtitutions however twice allude to Solomon's Song, and they ſeem to have borrowed the alluſions from the *larger* Epiſtles of Ignatius.

Heretics, ſay they, are *ἀλωπέκων μερίδες καὶ χαμαιζήλων ἀμπελώνων ἀφανισταί. vulpium partes, et vinearum humiliorum vaſtatores.* vi. 13.

And again: *τὴν ἐκκλησίαν Θεοῦ διαφθείροντες, ὡς ἀλώπεκες μικροὶ ἀμπελῶνα. qui Eccleſiam Dei devaſtant, ſicut parvæ vulpes vineam.* vi. 18.

Ignatius, *Epiſt. Interpol. ad Philad.* iii. *ἐστιν ἀλώπηξ, φθορεὺς ἀμπελῶνος Χριστοῦ. eſt vulpes corruptrix vineæ Chriſti.*

Cantic. ii. 15. Πιάσατε ἡμῖν ἀλώπεκας μικροὺς ἀφανίζοντας ἀμπελῶνας. *Take us the little foxes that ſpoil the vines.*

So, according to the Conſtitutions, and the *interpolated* Ignatius, the *Heretics* are *the little foxes who ſpoil the vineyards.* I blame not the alluſion; it is pretty enough, and better than the remark of a Commentator, whom I will not name, who explaining 1 *Kings* x. 22. *Once in three years came the navy of Tharſhiſh, bringing gold and ſilver, ivory, apes, and peacocks,* ſays that by the *Apes* we are to underſtand [p] *Heretics.* He bears ſomewhat hard upon the poor ape, who is an occaſional conformiſt, and an imitator of his betters. What will they ſay to this alluſion, who reject Solomon's Song, and yet receive the Conſtitutions, and the larger Epiſtles of Ignatius?

---

[p] He might as well have ſaid, ſince he would allegorize, that the *Apes* are *Informers*, and *Back-biters*; for the bite of an Ape is reckoned dangerous, and ſo is the bite of a Sycophant. Δῆγμα συκοφάντου is mentioned as incurable by Ariſtophanes, *Plut.* 886.

But it would not be fair to conceal a paſſage in Theocritus, i. 48.

— ἀμφὶ δέ μιν δὺ' ἀλώπεκες· ἁ μὲν ἀν' ὄρχως
Φοιτῇ σινομένα τὰν τρώξιμον.

—quem circum duæ vulpes: altera per ordines vitium
Incedit, lædens maturas uvas.

And v. 112.

Μισέω τὰς δασυκέρκος ἀλώπεκας, αἳ τὰ Μίκωνος
Αἰεὶ φοιτῶσαι τὰ ποθέσπερα ῥαγίζοντι.

Odi denſicaudes vulpes, quæ vites Miconis
Semper frequentantes, veſperi ex illis uvas comedunt.

for here alſo are *foxes ſpoiling the vineyards*; and who knows but ſomebody may take it into his head to ſay that the Conſtitutions and Ignatius borrowed the hint from the Poet?

This *interpolated* Ignatius cites the Canticles as a ſacred book, *Ad Epheſ.* xvii. Μύρον γὰρ, φησὶν, ἐκκενωθὲν ὄνομά σου· διὰ τοῦτο νεάνιδες ἠγάπησάν σε, εἵλκυσάν σε, ὀπίσω εἰς ὀσμὴν μύρων σου δραμοῦμεθα. *Unguentum enim,* inquit, *effuſum eſt nomen tuum: propterea adoleſcentulæ dilexerunt te, traxerunt te, poſt te in odorem unguentorum tuorum curremus.* From *Cant.* i. 3, 4.

It ſeems to appear from the Conſtitutions, that the curing of Dæmoniacs was a work of time, and that the attempt did not always ſucceed: for the Congregation is made to conſiſt of the Clergy, the Catechumens, the Energumens or Dæmoniacs, the Φωτιζόμενοι or thoſe who were preparing to receive baptiſm, the Penitents, and the Faithful; there is a form of prayer for the Energumens, that God would deliver them, viii. 7. and it is ſaid that a Dæmoniac may be inſtructed in the faith, but ſhall not be received to Chriſtian communion before he be cleanſed, unleſs he be in danger of dying, viii. 32. In a prayer for all mankind, there is a petition for the Dæmoniacs — ὑπὲρ τῶν χειμαζομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀλλοτρίου — ὅπως καθαρίσῃς ἐκ τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ πονηροῦ — *pro iis qui ab Adverſario jactantur* --- *ut eos mundes a vexatione Mali*. viii. 12. Ἐάν τις δαίμονα ἔχῃ, κληρικὸς μὴ γινέσθω, ἀλλὰ μηδὲ τοῖς πιστοῖς συνευχέσθω. καθαρισθεὶς δὲ, προσδεχέσθω, καὶ ἐὰν ᾖ ἄξιος, γινέσθω. *Si quis Dæmonem habeat, ne ſiat Clericus, ſed nec una cum ſidelibus oret: cum autem purgatus fuerit, recipiatur, et, ſi dignus extiterit, Clericus ſiat.* Canon LXX.

Is it not probable that the ancient Chriſtians accounted mad, and melancholy, and epileptic people to be poſſeſſed, at leaſt, for the moſt part? which would greatly increaſe the number of Dæmoniacs. The Jews ſeem to have received ſome additional notions concerning evil Spirits and their operations, from the Chaldæans, and, after their return from the captivity, to have aſcribed many diſeaſes and diſorders to theſe inviſible agents, beſides thoſe which were not to be accounted for by natural cauſes; and in this the ancient Chriſtians followed them.

Lightfoot ſays, *Judæis uſitatiſſimum erat morbos quoſdam graviores, eos præſertim, quibus diſtortum erat corpus, vel mens turbata et agitata phreneſi, malis ſpiritibus* *attribuere.* Hor. Hebr. Hence thoſe ſwarms of Energumens and Exorciſts mentioned in Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory.

The Conſtitutions perhaps command, but moſt certainly permit infant-baptiſm. Βαπτίζετε δὲ ὑμῶν καὶ τὰ νήπια, καὶ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ Θεοῦ. *but baptize even* (or *alſo) your infants, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of God*; which ſhews that infant-baptiſm was practiſed when this book was written. There is no eluding this teſtimony; it ſignifies nothing to ſay that νήπιον is a word which may be extended beyond infancy, to thirteen or fifteen years; for firſt, Chriſtian education and inſtruction is mentioned as ſubſequent to baptiſm; ſecondly, in general precepts the obvious and uſual ſignification of the words is to be ſuppoſed the intention of the lawgiver; thirdly, it is plain to the laſt degree that the word νήπιος, or νήπιον, will not exclude infants of a day old,

Ut contra ſi quis ſentiat, nihil ſentiat;

fourthly, the ſentence is partly borrowed from *Epheſ.* vi. 4. — μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκτρέφετε αὐτὰ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ νουθεσίᾳ Κυρίου, but inſtead of τέκνα, νήπια is uſed, as denoting a more tender age. In the Prayer for the Faithful, a petition is offered up for Chriſtian Infants — τῶν νηπίων τῆς ἐκκλησίας μνημονεύσωμεν, ὅπως ὁ Κύριος, τελειώσας αὐτὰ ἐν τῷ φόβῳ αὐτοῦ εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας ἀγάγῃ. *Infantium Eccleſiæ recordemur, uti Dominus eos in timore ſui reddat perfectos, et ad menſuram ætatis perducat.* viii. 10. τὰ νήπια ἄδρυνον. *infantes ad maturam ætatem perduc.* viii. 15. Will any man be ſo unreaſonable as to contend that νήπια here does not include *babes*, and that infants before they could walk and ſpeak, were excluded from the benefit and intention of theſe prayers?

Thus infant-baptiſm may be proved by the Conſtitutions; but at the ſame time the ſilence of the Scriptures upon this ſubject, compared with the clear declarations of the Conſtitutions, ſhews that theſe were drawn up after the Apoſtolical age. vi. 15.

It is obſervable, however, that viii. 32. where directions are given who ſhall be admitted to baptiſm, no mention is made of infants.

The Conſtitutions make the validity of baptiſm to depend upon a certain form of invocation, and they ſeem to make it depend alſo upon the piety of the prieſt, which is a hard caſe.

In the ceremonial of baptiſm, when the perſon is anointed, there is a form of prayer to be uſed; for, ſay they, ἐὰν μὴ εἰς ἕκαστον τούτων ἐπίκλησις γένηται παρὰ τοῦ εὐσεβοῦς ἱερέως τοιαύτη τις, εἰς ὕδωρ μόνον καταβαίνει ὁ βαπτιζόμενος, ὡς Ἰουδαῖοι, καὶ ἀποτίθεται μόνον τὸν ῥύπον τοῦ σώματος, οὐ τὸν ῥύπον τῆς ψυχῆς. *Niſi in unumquodque eorum talis quæpiam invocatio a pio ſacerdote adhibeatur, qui baptizatur in aquam tantum deſcendit, ut Judæi, et corporis tantum ſordes, non autem animæ deponit.* Where Cotelerius ſays; *Loquitur de baptiſmate ordinario adultorum, quod niſi ſedulo ac rite juxta totam cærimoniam tradatur a pio ſacerdote, et ſuſcipiatur a pio catechumeno, animæ ſordes non depellit, nec ſuum obtinet effectum.*

In the middle of the third century, great diſputes aroſe concerning rebaptizing thoſe, who had been baptized by Heretics. The Conſtitutions and Canons determine that the baptiſm adminiſtered by Heretics is invalid and null, vi. 15. which was the doctrine of Cyprian. In this controverſy, no appeal was made to the Conſtitutions. vii. 44.

The Conſtitutions repreſent adultery as a crime which was puniſhed with death, Εἴ τις ἀδελφὸν λέγων ἑαυτὸν εἶναι, ἀπατηθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Πονηροῦ κακοποιήσῃ, καὶ ἐλεγχθεὶς κατακριθῇ θανάτῳ ὡς μοιχὸς, ἢ φονεὺς, χωρίζεσθε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ — *Si quis ſe fratrem eſſe dicens, Diaboli fraude maleficium commiſerit, convictuſque ad mortem damnatus fuerit, tanquam adulter, aut homicida, digredimini ab illo.* v. 2.

Conſtantine made a law to puniſh adultery with death; and before his time it had not been a capital crime, in that ſenſe, in the Roman Empire. The *Lex Julia de Adulteriis coercendis* is diſcuſſed in *Digeſt.* L. xlviii. *Tit.* 5. but we are not clearly informed there what was the puniſhment. It ſeems to have been *relegatio*, a kind of baniſhment. See Tacitus *Ann.* ii. 50, and the Notes of *Vertranius*, and *Lipſius*; *Ann.* iv. 42, and the *Excurſus* of *Lipſius*, and *Novell.* cxxxiv. 10, and a Treatiſe of *Gerard Noodt*, called, *Diocletianus et Maximianus, ſive de tranſactione et pactione criminum.*

In ſome caſes however, the father and the huſband had a right to kill the guilty perſon, ſurpriſed in the crime.

I mention not this as an unanſwerable objection to the Conſtitutions, ſince death might have been the puniſhment of adultery in ſome places long before the law of Conſtantine, and ſince the adulterous Chriſtian might be no Roman citizen.

The beſt parts of the Conſtitutions are ſome of the prayers, taken probably from old Liturgies.

The Helleniſtic language, as it is called, has been mentioned as a confirmation of the Conſtitutions. Now this Helleniſtic ſtyle is nothing more than the ſtyle of one who tranſlates a Hebrew book verbally into Greek, or who thinks in Hebrew and writes in Greek. Suppoſe any perſon at any time, whoſe native language is Greek, who is a Chriſtian, who reads few or no profane authors, who never ſtudied his own tongue, who has frequently peruſed the Septuagint and the New Teſtament, and has them almoſt by heart, who writes upon a religious ſubject, who is perpetually citing the Scriptures; this perſon will write in the Helleniſtic manner, more or leſs, and will have Hebrew idioms, even though he ſhould not underſtand one word of the language, eſpecially if he has a mind to affect that ſtyle, which is very eaſily imitated.

My friend Mr. Waſſe, if I remember right, uſed to ſay that the ſtyle of the Conſtitutions was Helleniſtic. Be this as it will, there are in them abundance of words and phraſes never uſed by the writers of the New Teſtament, though they afterwards appear in Eccleſiaſtical authors, and ſome which are not at all in the old Chriſtian ſtyle, as for example, ὁ θεῖος Μωσῆς, which ſeems polite and Pagan, rather than Apoſtolical. vi. 25. The Scribler who is called *Dionyſius the Areopagite*, has the ſame expreſſion, γράφει δὲ καὶ ὁ θεῖος Ἰγνάτιος. *De Div. Nomin.* And ſo the *Clementina Epitome*, ὁ θεῖος Κλήμης. § 157. Ὁ θεῖος Ἀπόστολος, ſays Clemens Alex. ſpeaking of St. Paul, I. p. 287, 602. but he is a learned writer, and borrows a thouſand phraſes from Pagans.

The Conſtitutions ſay that the Jews crucified malefactors, ii. 48. which is not true. See Le Clerc's Hammond on *John* xviii. 31. and Grotius on *Galat.* iii. 13.

They ſay that Herod ordered Chriſt to be crucified, which is a miſtake. v. 19.

They ſay that Moſes forbad the Jews to read the Law out of the borders of their own country, which prohibition is not to be found. vi. 25.

They order widows to ſtay at home, to be grave, *etc.*. and then they cenſure thoſe who ramble about, and are buſy bodies, and idle talkers, and call them *μὴ χήρας ἀλλὰ ϖήρας, not widows, but beggars wallets, ἑτοίμȣς εἰς τὸ λαμϐάνειν, ever ready to receive.* But the beauty of the original is loſt in the tranſlation, becauſe the words are nearly alike in ſound, and different in ſenſe: ſo that the jingle cannot be preſerved. It is as if we ſhould ſay in Engliſh; ſuch widows behave themſelves not *godly* but *odly.* iii. 6.

They ſay that a rich covetous man is like a dragon guarding a treaſure, which emblem is borrowed from thoſe profane authors whom they forbid Chriſtians to read. iv. 4.

Vulpis cubile fodiens, dum terram eruit,—
Pervenit ad draconis ſpeluncam ultimam,

Cuſtodiebat qui theſauros abditos.
Phædrus iv. 19.

Largiris nihil, incubaſque gazæ,
Ut magnus draco, quem canunt poëtæ
Cuſtodem Sythici fuiſſe luci.
Martial. xii. 53.

They teach the reſurrection of the ſame *numerical* body, a doctrine concerning which the Scriptures are certainly ſilent. v. 7.

They are Heretics, ſay they, who make the Father, Son, and holy Spirit to be one and the ſame perſon, and Jeſus to be τὸν ἐπὶ ϖάντων Θεόν. This is ſuppoſed to be levelled againſt Simon Magus, but it is much more probable that it is againſt the Sabellians. vi. 26.

Having ordered Chriſtians to honour the martyrs, they caution them not to honour falſe martyrs. If by ψευδομάρτυρες they only meant perſons who perjured themſelves and bare falſe witneſs, as their citations may ſeem to imply, the caution was extremely ridiculous: but it is more probable that they meant either ſchiſmatics, or unfortunate men, miſtaken in ſome points of faith, whom they would not allow to be martyrs, though they died for the name of Chriſt, and though they might have lived, if they would have renounced him; ſuch, for example, as the Novatians. v. 9.

They make St. John ſay, *I got up*, *ἀναϛὰς ἐγὼ*, *and leaning upon Chriſt's breaſt I aſked him, etc.* As they reclined on couches before the table, St. John was ſeated the next below his Maſter, ſo that the back of his head was againſt the breaſt of Chriſt. He had therefore no occaſion to get up, but only to raiſe himſelf and turn his head a little when he ſpake to Chriſt. v. 14.

They make St. John affirm that *Σὺ εἶπας*, *thou haſt ſaid*, is not the ſame as *yes*. v. 14.

They take much from the *Epiſtle* of *Barnabas*, for it is improbable that Barnabas ſhould plunder them, and never own or hint the obligation. Now Barnabas wrote after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem.

They ſay at the end of a prayer— *Gather us into thy Kingdom.* Αὕτη μαραναθά. i. e. *Hæc venit Dominus*, which is little to the purpoſe: conſult the Notes there. In the ſame prayer they ſay, ὁ δυνατὸς Θεὸς, ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινὸς, ὁ ἀψευδὴς ἐν ταῖς ἐπαγγελίαις· which looks as if it were taken from Polycarp's prayer — ὁ ἀψευδὴς καὶ ἀληθινὸς Θεός. p. 201, *Ed. Cler.* vii. 26.

The Invocation after the Communion begins thus, Δέσποτα ὁ Θεὸς — ὁ καὶ τῶν σιωπώντων ἐπιστάμενος τὰς ἐντεύξεις — *Domine Deus — cognitor precum etiam eorum qui tacent.* The expreſſion is elegant and noble, but it ſeems to be taken from an old *Delphic Oracle*, in Herodotus, i. 47.

Καὶ κωφοῦ συνίημι, καὶ οὐ φωνεῦντος ἀκούω.

Mutum percipio, ſantis nihil audio vocem.

viii. 15.

They inſert in a prayer, *The holy Angels ſay to thee*, εἷς ἅγιος τῷ Φελμονεί. It is taken from *Daniel* viii. 13. Καὶ ἤκουσα ἑνὸς ἁγίου λαλοῦντος· καὶ εἶπεν εἷς ἅγιος τῷ Φελμωνὶ τῷ λαλοῦντι· ἕως πότε, etc.

As it is introduced in the Conſtitutions, it is neither better nor worſe than gibberiſh, and he who put it in did not underſtand it. vii. 35.

They ſay that the *Golden Calf* was the Ægyptian *Apis*, and ſo ſays the Author of the *Recognitions*, i. 35. which, if true, was yet more than they could certainly know, unleſs we ſhould grant them to have had it by inſpiration. i. 6. vi. 20.

They relate Peter's combat with Simon, in which he ſhot the Magician flying, and brought him down to the ground. The falſe *Hegeſippus*, and one *Abdias*, in his *Hiſtoria Apoſtolica*, confirm it likewiſe. So we have no leſs than three witneſſes for it; but they are,

Sardi venales, alius alio nequior.

The firſt author, fit to be named, who ſpeaks of it, is Arnobius, and he comes too late. Cotelerius in his notes on the Conſtitutions, very honeſtly declares himſelf to be a doubter, and gives the reader leave to reject the ſtory: but Tillemont is not ſo indulgent, and comes upon us with a formidable liſt of vouchers: *Quand il ſeroit vray que cette hiſtoire ſeroit une fiction, nous aimerions mieux, tant qu'on n'aura point de preuve claire et convaincante de ſa fauſſeté, nous tromper en ce point avec Arnobe, S. Cyrille de Jeruſalem, les legats du Pape Libere, S. Ambroiſe, S. Auguſtin, S. Iſidore de Peluſe, S. Theodoret, et pluſieurs autres, que d'eſtre obligez d'accuſer d'une credulité indiſcrete un grand nombre des plus illuſtres maitres de l'Egliſe Latine et Greque.* Hiſt. Eccl. i. p. 178.

He who will believe all that he finds related by the writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, ſhould be provided with a double portion of credulity, and have the ſtomach of an oſtrich to digeſt fables. But, the Fathers here mentioned were not the inventors of this *combat*, they ſtand clear of ſuch a charge, and are only to be blamed for paying too much regard to traditionary reports, or to ſome fabulous author. One would think that the ſilence of the Fathers before Arnobius were alone a ſufficient reaſon to reject this ſtory, and particularly the ſilence of Euſebius, who wrote after Arnobius; and their ſilence ſhews at the ſame time that they knew nothing, or believed nothing of the Conſtitutions.

Let it be obſerved, to the honour of Euſebius, that of all the ancient Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians, he has obtruded the leaſt traſh upon his readers, and that he has alſo ſhut out from the Scriptures of the New Teſtament all ſpurious, dubious, and Apocryphal authors, all Apoſtles falſely ſo called, whom he ſerved as Jupiter did Vulcan,

Ῥίψε, [a] ποδὸς τεταγὼν, ἀπὸ βηλοῦ θεσπεσίοιο.

ii. 14. vi. 9.

---

[a] *Hurl'd headlong tumbling from th'etherial ſky.*

The Conſtitutions call the name of Chriſt, τὸ ὄνομα τὸ καινὸν — from Iſaiah lxii. 2. which yet looks alſo like an alluſion to Revel. ii. 17. ὄνομα καινόν. iii. 12. — τὸ ὄνομά μȣ τὸ καινόν. and they ſay that the Church of Chriſt is νύμφη κεκαλλωπισμένη Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ, perhaps from *Revel.* xxi. 2. ἡτοιμασμένην ὡς νύμφην κεκοσμημένην τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς. And yet the ſeventy-ſixth *Apoſtolical Canon* mentions not the Revelation amongſt the books of the New Teſtament. ii. 15. 25. The ſame Canon aſcribes to St. Paul the Epiſtle to the Hebrews.

They ſay that *tithes* are due to the Clergy, becauſe Ἰῶτα, which ſtands for ten, is the firſt letter of the name of Jeſus. Many of the Clergy would be in a poor condition, if they had no better claim to to them. ii. 25.

They give an interpretation of the proper name *Iſrael*, concerning which ſee the notes. vii. 36.

They abound with citations of the Scriptures, and are remarkable for an exuberant profuſion of words, and a moſt tireſome repetition of the ſame things, which ſhews that in all probability they are not one man's invention, but a medley.

They not only heap paſſages of Scripture one upon another, but where the thing might have been alluded to in three words, they tranſcribe whole pages: --- *aliter non fit liber.*

After having cenſured all the other Jewiſh ſects, they give the Eſſenes a good character, *οἱ δὲ τούτων πάντων ἑαυτοὺς χωρίσαντες, καὶ τὰ πάτρια φυλάσσοντες, εἰσὶν Ἐσσαῖοι. Qui vero ab iis omnibus ſepararunt ſe, ac patrios ritus ſervant, Eſſæi ſunt.* vi. 6.

When the Jews were returned from Babylon, and before the coming of Chriſt, three ſects aroſe amongſt them, the Sadducees, the Phariſees, and the Eſſenes, of which, though none were good, the Sadducees were the worſt, the Phariſees the beſt, and the Eſſenes ſuperſtitious fanatics.

The Sadducees were of opinion that they neither wanted nor received any divine aſſiſtance for the performance of their duty, that the rewards and the puniſhments which God had denounced, were only temporal; that there were neither Angels, nor ſpirits, nor reſurrection, nor future ſtate, but that the whole man periſhed at death. It has been ſuppoſed, but not ſufficiently proved, that they rejected not only the traditions of the Elders, but the writings of the [r] Prophets, and all the ſacred Books, except the Law: ſo thought Jerom, and many of the Fathers.

Our Saviour proved a future ſtate to the Sadducees from a Text in the books of Moſes, where God is called the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, after they were dead. Hence it has been inferred, that the Sadducees rejected the Prophets; elſe, ſay they, Chriſt would have appealed to the prophets, who teach this doctrine more fully. But why ſo? From the words of Moſes cited by our Saviour the doctrine of a future ſtate may as clearly be deduced, as from any one ſingle text which can be produced out of any one of the Prophets. The Sadducees might pay a greater regard to Moſes than to the other Prophets, and yet not reject them neither. Beſides, as the Sadducees, in their diſcourſe with Chriſt, raiſed an objection to another ſtate from a paſſage in Moſes, Chriſt choſe to anſwer them from the ſame author. *Hoc fundamento uſi ſunt Sadducæi, Nullum articulum fidei admittendum eſſe, qui non ex libris Moſaicis probari poſſet. Reliquos autem Scripturæ libros ipſi legebant, et ita interpretabantur, ut fundamento ſuo contradicere non viderentur.* Pearſon *Vindic. Ignat.* c, vii. Baſnage is of the ſame opinion, *Hiſt. des Juifs*, ii. 6. *Tota religio conſiſtit in libris Moſis: in cæteris nullum fidei ſeu Legis dogma ſtatuitur*, ſays Orobius, who yet was no Sadducee, but rather, like moſt of his brethren, a follower of the Phariſees.

---

[r] When Joſephus ſays that the Sadducees obſerved nothing beſides *the laws*, he ſeems to oppoſe the *written laws* to the *traditions* only, not to the *prophets*. See *Antiq.* XIII. x. 6. XVIII. i. 4. *Edit. Haverc.*

The greateſt Sect of the Jews was that of the Phariſees, and in many reſpects it ſeems to have been the beſt alſo. The *Conſtitutions* charge them with Fataliſm, and ſo doth Epiphanius, and ſome other Ancients, a charge which perhaps they could not have made good. They ought rather to have aſcribed this notion to the Eſſenes; for the Eſſenes were ſtrict Predeſtinarians, but the Phariſees, like the Semi-Pelagians, thought that divine aſſiſtance and human liberty cooperated and were reconcileable. So ſays[s] Joſephus, who was better acquainted with them than the obſcure Author of the *Conſtitutions*. The principal fault, in point of doctrine, belonging to the Phariſees was a zeal for the traditions of the Elders; and though this unwritten Law was, as we may well ſuppoſe, a heap of lies, nonſenſe, and ſuperſtition, they paid more regard to it, than to the word of God.

But if we conſider the ignorance and corruption which then prevailed amongſt the Jews, we muſt acknowledge that the Phariſees and their diſciples were by no means the worſt part of the nation.

---

[s] B. J. II. viii. 14. *Antiq.* XIII. v. 9. XVIII. i. 3. *The Phariſees,* ſays Prideaux, *held a free-will in conjunction with predeſtination.*

St. Paul bears them this teſtimony: *According to the ſtraiteſt* (*the exacteſt*) *ſect of our religion,* ſays he, *I lived a Phariſee.*

Our Saviour declares concerning them: [t] *The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes' ſeat: all therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve and do, that obſerve and do; but do not ye after their works, for they ſay and do not.*

In many places of Scripture, where it is ſaid, Do this, but do not that, or, This ſhall be, but that ſhall not be, the words are to be underſtood, not abſolutely, but comparatively: ſo that the meaning here may be; Of the two, it is better and ſafer to do what the [u] Scribes and Phariſees teach, than what they do; for their doctrine, even ſuch as it is, is preferable to their practice; and particularly, when they interpret the precepts of Moſes, that is, the written Law, not the oral Law, and the traditions of the Elders.

---

[t] Matt. xxiii. 2.

[v] The Scribes and Phariſees: that is, ſays a learned Friend of mine, the *Scribes,* who were ſo by their profeſſion, and were *Phariſees* by their ſect. The *Phariſees,* as *Phariſees,* did not ſit in the ſeat of Moſes: the *Scribes* did, whether Phariſees or not.

The Phariſees aſſerted the ſoul's immortality, and a life to come. In this they deſerved ſome praiſe, when compared with the Sadducees who rejected theſe doctrines. It is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe that this belief, though mixed with erroneous notions, might have an influence upon their behaviour, and make them in ſome reſpects and upon ſome occaſions better than thoſe who thought that the ſoul and body periſhed together.

To this belief and this diſbelief of a future ſtate may perhaps be aſcribed the different behaviour of the Phariſees and of the Sadducees after the aſcenſion of our Lord: for then the reſurrection of Chriſt, and the general reſurrection of the dead, and a day of judgment and retribution was conſtantly and particularly taught by the Apoſtles; and therefore the Sadducees were their oppoſers and perſecutors, whilſt the Phariſees were more inclined to protect them and ſide with them; and many of the firſt Jewiſh converts to Chriſtianity ſeem to have conſiſted of this ſect.

But as Chriſt during his miniſtry often preached againſt the Traditions of the Phariſees, and denounced woes againſt them, they were his chief adverſaries.

It may be aſked why Chriſt did not more frequently cenſure the faults and errors of the Sadducees, who were worſe than the Phariſees. One reaſon ſeems to have been this, that the Phariſees were the moſt numerous and the moſt learned ſect, and had the greateſt influence over the common people; therefore it was moſt expedient that the reformation ſhould begin amongſt them, and that their followers and admirers ſhould be undeceived, and cautioned not to repoſe too great a confidence in them.

Another reaſon was, becauſe the peculiar defects of that ſect ſoon crept into Chriſtianity, and remain in it to this day;

but the[w] Sadducees were a ſect which declined and came to nothing, or to very little, after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. Moſt of the Sadducees who eſcaped that calamity, probably became apoſtates and Pagans, a change for which they were too well prepared; and moſt of the Jews at this time are of the ſect of the Phariſees.

The bad character, which is given in the Scriptures of the Phariſees, ought not to be extended to all who were of that party. It is enough if the majority of them, if the moſt eminent in authority were very wicked. There were without queſtion ſeveral among them, miſtaken in many things, and carried into faults by the prevailing notions of the ſect, yet men of ſincerity, and of virtuous diſpoſitions.

Notre Seigneur a témoigné plus de mépris contre les Phariſiens, que contre les Saddu-céens. C'eſt aux Phariſiens, qu'il en veut en tout et par tout, c'eſt contre eux qu'il

---

[w] Juſtin indeed mentions the Sadducees in his *Dial.* with *Trypho.* See Baſnage *Hiſt. des Juifs*, ii. 7.

lance ſes plus ſéveres cenſures, c'eſt eux qu'il tâche de décrier. Pourquoi cela? C'eſt qu'encore qu'ils fuſſent plus orthodoxes, ils avoient le cœur plus gâté d'hypocriſie et d'orgueil, ce qui les rendoit plus incapables de ſe convertir à l'Evangile. Bayle *Penſées diverſes* § 186. I think the reaſons which I have aſſigned are more probable than theſe.

As to the Eſſenes, who are ſaid in the Conſtitutions to have adhered to the religious rites and cuſtoms of their anceſtors. and who are never mentioned by the ſacred writers, it is well known that they neglected ſome ceremonial laws, and that they obſerved many fooliſh auſterities, many fantaſtical and ſuperſtitious inſtitutions of their own. Thus, for example, they accounted it a heinous crime to eaſe nature on the Sabbath-day, as Joſephus teſtifies, who ſhould alſo have informed us what they did in caſes of urgent neceſſity, which will ſometimes happen. As the Sabbatic River, mentioned by Joſephus, B. J. vii. 5. was dry for ſix days, and flowed plentifully on the ſeventh, ſo, on the contrary, the Eſſenes were open for ſix days, and ſhut on the ſeventh. But ſome of the Learned think that this marvellous and moſt religious River flowed at other times, and reſted on the Sabbath, and that there is a fault in the text of Joſephus: ſee the notes there. If ſo, the parallel is better between the *Fluvius Sabbaticus*, and the *Podex Sabbaticus*.

The Eſſenes, ſays Joſephus, on the Sabbath-day οὐδὲ σκεῦός τι μετακινῆσαι θαῤῥοῦσιν, οὐδὲ ἀποπατεῖν. *neque vas ullum loco movere audent, nec alvum exonerare.* B. J. ii. 8.

Porphyry ſays of them, Τοσαύτη δ' ἐστὶν αὐτῶν ἡ λιτότης ἡ περὶ τὴν δίαιταν, καὶ ἡ ὀλιγότης, ὡς ἐν τῇ ἑβδομάδι μὴ δεῖσθαι κενώσεως, ἣν τηρεῖν εἰώθασιν εἰς ὕμνους τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ εἰς ἀνάπαυσιν. *Et quidem tanta ipſorum eſt in victu frugalitas, atque parcimonia, ut ne ſeptimana quidem integra egerendi ſit ulla neceſſitas: quam ſibi abſtinentiæ legem dixere, partim ut ad hymnos Deo concinendos aptiores ſint, partim ut faciliori utantur ſomno.* Apud Euſeb. *Præp. Ev.* ix. 3.

Vigerus, the tranſlator, though he was a learned man, fell into an abſence of mind, which will ſometimes happen to us all, and did not perceive that ἑϐδομὰς here means, not *a week*, but the *Sabbath-day*, by which miſtake he was led from one error into another to the end of the ſentence, and made the Eſſenes wonderful people indeed, and like Milton's Angels, who void what they eat by inſenſible perſpiration. The ſenſe is; *The Eſſenes uſed ſo plain and ſpare a diet, that they had no occaſion to diſburden on the Sabbath, a day which they kept as a day of reſt, and which they ſpent in ſinging religious hymns.*

The Eſſenes and Phariſees agreed in one reſpect very well, in being ſuperſtitious obſervers of trifles, and the Author of the *Conſtitutions* ſeems to have had ſome portion of the ſame Spirit. *La nation Judaïque a été livrée a un tel eſprit de puériles, et de chimeriques obſervances, que leurs plus graves Docteurs ont étendu le Rituel juſques aux actions les plus machinales, comme eſt celle d'aller au privé. Malheur à qui ne* *ſçait pas bien s'orienter; car les quatre points cardinaux de l'horiſon ne ſont pas également favorables. Je ne puis dire qu'en Latin le reſte de leurs ridicules ſuperſtitions.* Dixit R. Akiba, ingreſſus ſum aliquando poſt Rabbi Joſuam in ſedis ſecretæ locum, et tria ab eo didici. Didici 1, quod non verſus orientem et occidentem, ſed verſus ſeptentrionem et auſtrum convertere nos debeamus. Didici 2, quod non in pedes erectum, ſed jam conſidentem, ſe retegere liceat. Didici 3, quod podex non dextra ſed ſiniſtra manu abſtergendus ſit. Ad hæc objecit ibi Ben Haſas; Uſque adeo vere perfricuiſti frontem erga magiſtrum tuum ut cacantem obſervares? Reſpondit ille, Legis hæc arcana ſunt ad quæ diſcenda id neceſſario mihi agendum fuit. *Ex* Barajetha, etc. *Voila un merveilleux Docteur, qui, même ſur ſa chaiſe percée, expliquoit ſans dire mot les myſteres de la Loi.* Bayle, *Dict.* AKIBA.

Hammond, in his notes on 1 *Cor.* v. 5. ſpeaking of the diſeaſes and torments, which in the Apoſtolical times ſeized thoſe perſons who were excommunicated, and delivered up to Satan, ſays, *Joſephus ſimile quidpiam inter Eſſenos fuiſſe dicit, his verbis, etc.* Upon which Le Clerc remarks; *Quod Joſephus de Eſſenis refert id poteſt ita intelligi, ut excommunicatus ex mœrore interiiſſe dicatur, non miraculoſa vi excommunicationis; quod tamen ſi crediſſet Joſephus, non eſſet nefas ei fidem abrogare.*

It happens well for Joſephus, that he has not affirmed ſo fooliſh a thing. He only ſays, Τοὺς δ' ἐπ' ἀξιοχρέοις ἁμαρτήμασιν ἁλόντας ἐκβάλλουσι τοῦ τάγματος· ὁ δ' ἐκκριθεὶς, οἰκτίστῳ πολλάκις μόρῳ διαφθείρεται. τοῖς γὰρ ὅρκοις καὶ τοῖς ἔθεσιν ἐνδεδεμένος, οὐδὲ τῆς παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις τροφῆς δύναται μεταλαμβάνειν, ποηφαγῶν δὲ καὶ λιμῷ τὸ σῶμα τηκόμενος διαφθείρεται. διὸ δὴ πολλοὺς ἐλεήσαντες ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἀναπνοαῖς ἀνέλαβον, ἱκανὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἁμαρτήμασιν αὐτῶν τὴν μέχρι θανάτου βάσανον ἡγούμενοι. *Deprehenſos vero in peccatis gravioribus ex ordine ſuo ejiciunt, iſque cui contigit e cœtu ejici, non raro mortem obit miſerrimam. Nam juramentis et ritibus obligatus ne ali-*

orum quidem eſcis uti poteſt; ſed dum herbas comedit, corpus fame tabeſcit, atque ita interit. Quam ob rem etiam ipſi plurimos miſerati, extremum jam agentes ſpiritum receperunt; pro peccatis ſatis pœnarum, quod ad mortem uſque fuerint cruciati, dediſſe exiſtimantes. B. J. II. viii. 8.

We ſee here that the excommunicated Eſſenes died, neither of any miraculous diſtemper, nor yet of grief, but were ſtarved to death, becauſe they dared not to eat with other people, being bound by the oaths which they had taken, oaths which were ſuperſtitious, ſtupid, and unlawful.

One branch of the Eſſenes had a moſt uncharitable opinion of the female ſex, and thought that a woman could ſcarcely be found, who was faithful to her huſband; and therefore they would not marry. How could they obſerve the Commandment which ſays, *Honour thy father and thy mother*, who entertained ſuch hard ſentiments of their mothers?

It is a conjecture of Van Dale, which, whether it be true or not, is ingenious

and

and plauſible, that Sadduceiſm owed its birth to the traditionary doctrines of the Jews. Theſe traditions were ſo exceſſively impertinent, ſuch quinteſſential, treble-refined folly, and yet ſo dogmatically enforced by haughty Phariſees and prating Doctors, as Importances, that ſome of the nation who could not endure to be treated at this overbearing rate, rebelled, and became Free-thinkers, and flew out as far into the oppoſite extreme, and rejected the ſoul's immortality, as a doctrine not clearly delivered in the Scriptures, ſupported by Tradition, and proceeding from that muddy fountain of everlaſting nonſenſe. Miſerable ſpirit of contradiction! Becauſe a man would deprive me of common ſenſe, I muſt, in reſentment, throw away my religion! This is fulfilling in a very bad way the precept, *If any man will take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak alſo.*

The Conſtitutions forbid Chriſtians to wear a gold ring, and to ſhave their beards, which muſt have diſguſted the Roman knights, and the Roman barbers. The true reaſon of the latter prohibition is this; It is ſaid in *Leviticus* xix. 27. *Neither ſhalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.* It is a wonder that they did not command Chriſtians to keep the back door ſhut on Sundays, according to the laudable cuſtom of the Eſſenes.

The Conſtitutions, from the beginning to the end, turn Chriſtianity into a mere Ceremonial Law. i. 3.

They prove the reſurrection by the pretty amuſing ſtory of the ***phœnix*; though indeed they warrant not the the truth of it, but introduce the phœnix with an *ὡς αὐτοί φασι*, and they cite the *Sibylline Oracles* as prophecies, and ten verſes from them, which clearly foretel the reſurrection of the dead, the conflagration of the world, and the judgment at the laſt day, and which are manifeſtly the manufacture of a Chriſtian:

---

* And yet even honeſt Herodotus, who was inclined enough to give into the marvellous, rejected the ſtory of the Phœnix: — ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες. etc. ii. 73.

Ἀλλ’ ὁπότ’ ἤδη πάντα τέφρα σποδόεσσα γένηται,
Καὶ πῦρ κοιμίσῃ Θεὸς ἄφθιτος, ὅσπερ ἀνῆψεν,
Ὀστέα καὶ σποδιὴν αὐτὸς Θεὸς ἔμπαλιν ἄνδρα
Μορφώσῃ, στήσῃ δὲ βροτοὺς πάλιν ὡς πάρος ἦσαν,
Καὶ τότε δὴ κρίσις ἔσται, ἐφ’ ᾗ δικάσει Θεὸς αὐτὸς,
Κρίνων ἔμπαλι κόσμον· ὅσοι δ’ ὑπὸ δυσσεβίῃσιν
Ἥμαρτον θνητοὶ, τοὺς δ’ αὖ πάλι γαῖα καλύψει.
Ὅσσοι δ’ εὐσεβέουσι, πάλιν ζήσοντ’ ἐνὶ κόσμῳ,
Πνεῦμα Θεοῦ δόντος, ζωήν θ’ ἅμα καὶ χάριν αὐτοῖς
Εὐσεβέσιν· πάντες τέ τότ’ εἰσόψονται ἑαυτούς.

Omnia ſed poſtquam in cineres collapſa jacebunt,
Æternumque Deus ſuccenſum extinxerit ignem,
Inque hominem Deus ipſe iterum formaverit oſſa,
Et cineres, mortalibus, ut fuerant, renovatis:
Judicium tunc certo erit, in quo jus feret æquum
Ipſe Deus, mundi judex: ac qui impietate
Peccarint, iterum injecta tellure tegentur:

Contra

Contra iterum in mundo vivent pietatis amici,
Sanctis dante Deo vitam, ſlatum, atque favorem.
Se tunc agnoſcent omnes, ſeſeque videbunt.

Κείνων κόσμον—is Eccleſiaſtical Greek. v. 7.

It is remarkable that the Author of the Conſtitutions, who thus cites the Sibyl, as a propheteſs of good authority, at leaſt as one fit to convince the Pagans, yet treats her with contempt (according to ſome copies) and calls her, not Σιβύλλα, but Ἀβύλλα, or *crazy fool*, which reading Cotelerius has admitted into the text. If the *old Woman* had been alive, ſhe might have replied to *Pſeudo-Clemens*,

Parcius iſta, Pater, tamen objicienda memento.

It would not be ſuitable to good manners to reproach a Lady for pronouncing or ſpelling a word wrong, and therefore I am almoſt afraid to obſerve that in the ſecond line the Propheteſs has made a falſe quantity, for the *penultima* in κοιμίσῃ is ſhort. Perhaps the place was corrupted by the Librarian, with whom we make free, and call him a blunderer. He ſhould have written κοιμήσῃ, or κοιμίσσῃ. In Homer *Odyſſ.* M. 372, ſome Editions give us

Ἦ με μάλ' εἰς ἄτην κοιμίσατε νηλέϊ ὕπνῳ.

But there it has been changed into κοιμήσατε.

Menander alſo *Fragm.* p. 2. has

Ἕκαστος ἡμῶν, καὶ ζωηγωνίσατο.

which Bentley changed into ζωηγωνίζετ. Le Clerc endeavoured in vain to defend the common reading againſt him by the paſſage in Homer cited above. Le Clerc has committed ſome faults in his Edition of *Menander* and *Philemon*, becauſe he had not ſufficiently conſidered the laws of proſody: but they who made thoſe laws their ſtudy, and reproached him for his ignorance of them, were not able to keep themſelves free from ſuch faults, as

might

might eaſily be ſhewed. The ſmall and trifling blemiſhes of this kind in Le Clerc are covered and amply compenſated by other productions, for which he deſerves, and will receive praiſe and honour:

Th'eſtate which Wits inherit after death.

It were eaſy to make many more objections to the Conſtitutions, but [y] others have done it ſufficiently, and perhaps it is not right to wage war with the dead:

Nullum cum victis certamen et æthere caſſis.

THE APOSTOLICAL CANONS, though ſome of them may be ancient, and compoſed in the ſecond and third centuries, are not Apoſtolical, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word, and are interpolated in ſeveral places, as Beveridge himſelf confeſſes, who undertook their defence, and made the moſt he could of them. See his *Cod. Can. Vindic.* L. I. cap. x. 4.

---

[y] See Turner's Diſcourſe on the Conſtitutions.

Canon I. Ἐπίσκοπος ὑπὸ Ἐπισκόπων χειροτονείσθω δύο ἢ τριῶν.

Quinque doctores et prophetas Antiochiæ congregatos eſſe traditur. Act. xiii. 1. *Barnabam, Symeonem Nigrum, Lucium, Manahem, et Saulum.* — *Dicebat Spiritus ſanctus,* Ἀφορίσατε δή μοι τόν τε Βαρνάβαν καὶ τὸν Σαῦλον — *et protinus ſubjungitur,* τότε νηστεύσαντες καὶ προσευξάμενοι καὶ ἐπιθέντες τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῖς ἀπέλυσαν. *E quinque igitur hic congregatis duo, Barnabas et Saulus, ordinati ſunt: reliqui ſunt ergo tres ſoli qui ordinarunt. Chryſoſtomus autem in locum ait,* ὅρα πάλιν ὑπὸ τίνων χειροτονεῖται, ὑπὸ Λουκείου καὶ Μαναῆ, *ac ſi Symeon ordinationi non intereſſet. Sed intererat haud dubie; quod etiam exinde conſtat, quod non in duali ſed plurali numero dicitur,* νηστεύσαντες, προσευξάμενοι, ἐπιθέντες, *adeo ut tres tunc temporis, non plures, nec pauciores, ordines conferebant.* Beveridge.

To all theſe arguments I chuſe to ſay nothing: I only make a ſmall grammatical remark, that in Greek, a verb in the plural is frequently joined to two nominative caſes ſingular, and a participle plural with two ſubſtantives ſingular, and that the Dual number is not once uſed in all the New Teſtament, which Beveridge had forgotten, or had not obſerved.

What ſort of opinion Beveridge had, concerning the authority of theſe Canons, and whether he thought that Chriſtians were obliged to obſerve them, is not very material to know: he ſeems to have entertained a great veneration for them. He ſays that by eſtabliſhing the antiquity of the Canons, *hoc etiam boni commodique et nobis et aliis quibuſcunque, ſe primitivorum Chriſtianorum moribus conformes gerere cupientibus, emerget; quod præ oculis habeamus, qua ratione vitam noſtram ad eorum exemplar inſtituamus* — p. 76.

The primitive Chriſtians deſerve to be honoured on many accounts, and imitated in many things, and the ſame ought to be ſaid of this learned and pious Biſhop, but, after all that can be ſaid, the authors of theſe Canons were fallible men; and it would be better for a Chriſtian to take the precepts of Chriſt and the undoubted writings of the Apoſtles for the rule of his faith and practice, and to conform to primitive Chriſtianity juſt as far as primitive Chriſtianity is conformable to Scripture and to Reaſon, and not to aſcribe a ſacred and Apoſtolical authority to a ſet of unknown Canon and Conſtitution-makers.

Beveridge aſcribes a kind of Apoſtolical authority to the L. Canon, which requires of the Biſhops and Preſbyters that they ſhould make uſe of a threefold immerſion in baptiſm, under pain of being depoſed. *Aliquo tamen modo*, ſays he, *id ab Apoſtolis traditum negare non auſi ſumus; utpote quod a ſanctis Patribus nec ſemel aſſertum legimus.* The Teſtimony of the Fathers, in matters of tradition, is not always to be depended upon. But did our author himſelf uſe to conform to this canon?

The LXIX. Canon ſtrictly requires the obſervation of the Quadrageſimal Faſt under ſpiritual pains and penalties: and this, together with other ſtated Faſts, Beveridge, takes to have been of Apoſtolical inſtitution. It is not probable that the Apoſtles enjoined ſuch things, as abſolutely neceſſary; things of that kind are more properly ſubjects for counſels than for precepts. To be temperate, and to keep the paſſions and appetites in due ſubjection, is the duty of all men: abſtinence from food is ſo far good as it is found to conduce to this end; but what ſuits one climate, and one conſtitution, and one age of life, ſuits not another.

The legiſlative ſpirit began to operate betimes, and when the Church made laws, relating to doctrines and opinions, which were not to be found in the New Teſtament, the *Codex* became very bulky, and there was no end of law-making. How ſhould there?

Somebody once aſked a Scholar, what was the meaning of ff, which ſtands for the *Digeſts* or *Pandects*, and was told that it meant *Farrago Farraginum*. The anſwerer was not in earneſt: nor am I. — but Tacitus ſays ſomewhere: *Corruptiſſi-*

ma Republica plurimæ leges. And ſo much for this ſubject.

THE SIBYLLINE ORACLES were compoſed at different times, by different perſons, firſt by Pagans, and then perhaps by Jews, and certainly by Chriſtians. See the collections concerning them made by Fabricius *Bibl. Gr.* i. p. 167. an Author, whoſe memory all the learned world ought to bleſs, and to whom they ſhould wiſh

— tenuem et ſine pondere terram,
Spiranteſque crocos, et in urna perpetuum ver.

Juſtin Martyr, *Cohort. ad Græcos* 38, mentions the Sibyl as clearly foretelling the coming and the actions of Chriſt. *His verbis,* ſays the laſt Editor, *Sibyllini, quales hodie extant, libri indicantur, in quibus tam aperta eſt rerum a Chriſto gerendarum prædictio, ut eam ex eventis fictam fuiſſe vix quiſquam hodie non fateatur.* Præf. p. LXX. and in the Notes, *Nihil ſane ſuſpicatus eſt Juſtinus, quamvis omnes horum*

horum librorum paginæ fraudem clamitent. Thus the Benedictin, compelled by hard neceſſity, who would have defended both the Sibylline Oracles, and his friend Juſtin who cited them, if he had been able. It ought however to be obſerved that ſome perſons, of at leaſt as much learning and as much judgment as he, have ſuſpected the genuineneſs of the *Cohortatio.*

The Sibylline Oracles ſeem to have been all, from firſt to laſt, and without any one exception, mere impoſtures.

We have a collection of them in eight books, which abound with phraſes, words, facts, and paſſages taken from the LXX. and the New Teſtament, and are a remarkable ſpecimen of aſtoniſhing impudence, and miſerable poetry.

It was a pleaſant conceit of Poſſevin, in his *Apparatus ſacer*, that a choice ought to be made of paſſages from theſe Oracles, with proper notes, which might be uſed in ſchools. It would greatly perplex any man of learning to make a choice where all is ſo bad; he would be like *Buridan's Aſs* between two bundles of *muſty* hay.

Iſ. Voſſius, the Patron of Sibylline Oracles, *forged*, as he pretended, by *divinely inſpired* Jews, would yet have given them up as bad compoſitions, and void of all elegance. *Siquis*, ſays he, *Græcos qui ſuperſunt Judæorum conſulat verſus, prorſus illos ſimiles fuiſſe inveniet, ac fuere veterum Chriſtianorum carmina, quæ, ſi unum et alterum excipias, iſtiuſmodi ſunt, ut Scaliger ſibi in ſterquilinio verſari videretur, quotieſcunque ad ea legenda ſe conferret.* De Sibyll. c. 9. This is true enough. Nor does he attempt to defend the preſent collection. *Quæ olim a Patribus Chriſtianis lecta fuere, et etiamnum ſuperſunt et leguntur oracula, longe a me abeſt ut omnia ea ejuſdem generis et auctoritatis eſſe exiſtimem, ac fuere ea de quibus hactenus ſumus locuti. In his quippe quæ Chriſti nativitatem præceſſere Sibyllinis, ea ſolum continebantur, quæ ex Prophetarum ſcriptis depromta eſſent vaticinia. At ve-*

ro in illis, quæ vulgo leguntur, ea quoque occurrunt, quæ non ab aliis, quam ab iis, potuerunt conſcribi, qui centum et viginti demum annis Chriſto fuere poſteriores. And he concludes that the old Oracles were enlarged and interpolated by Chriſtians. c. 8.

Mention is made by various writers of a Sibyl, who propheſied before the Trojan war, and from whom Homer took many lines, and particularly this prophecy, Il. Υ. 307.

Νῦν δὲ δὴ Αἰνείαο βίη Τρώεσσιν ἀνάξει,
Καὶ παῖδες παίδων, τοί κεν μετόπισθε γένωνται.

Which Virgil thus imitates, and accommodates to his own plan:

Hic domus Æneæ cunctis dominabitur oris,
Et nati natorum, et qui naſcentur ab illis.

Others have ſaid that Homer himſelf was endued with a prophetic ſpirit when he wrote thoſe lines. Others have obſerved a great affinity of ſtyle between Homer and the Sibylline verſes, and thence have concluded that the poet was a [1] plagiary. Strange! that men of letters could talk at this idle rate. Of all the ancient poets, Homer, who has a great ſimplicity, is perhaps the moſt eaſy to be imitated in point of bare diction and verſification, and many perſons are capable of cloſely copying him, or ſome other poet, as to ſtyle and numbers, who have no bright genius or invention, and are incapable of compoſing an elegant poem: but after all, the Sibylline Oracles are juſt as like Homer, as the *Epiſtolæ Obſcurorum Virorum* are like *Cicero's* Epiſtles to *Atticus*.

Homer's prophecy is indeed remarkable, and might afford ſome obſervations not quite ſo childiſh as thoſe above-mentioned. We may conjecture,

1. That the Poet went to Troy, i. e. to the region ſo called, and carefully ſurveyed the place, and the country about it;

---

[1] Clemens Alexandrinus charges Homer with taking Verſes from Orpheus and Muſæus, inſtead of ſuſpecting that theſe were later writers, under falſe names, who pillaged Homer. *Strom.* vi. p. 738. 751.

and indeed in his *Ilias* he paints and deſcribes[a], as one who knew every ſpot of ground;

2. That the reſidue of the Trojans, after the departure of the Greeks, aſſembled together and ſettled in their own country, under Æneas;

3. That when Homer came to Troy, a prince reigned there who was deſcended from Æneas, and might be his grandſon;

4. That this Prince treated Homer kindly, and gave him ſome memoirs and informations concerning the Trojan chiefs, and particularly concerning his own anceſtor;

5. That therefore Homer frequently celebrates Æneas, as the Son of a Goddeſs, a warrior of great bravery, and of an amiable character, and one much favoured and beloved by the Gods; he al-

---

[a] Ἔϛι δέ τις προπάροιθε πόλεως αἰπεῖα κολόνη.
Il. B. 811.

ſo mentions ſome particularities concerning him, as that Priamus[b] did not love and honour him according to his deſerts;

6. That Homer lived at leaſt ninety years after the Trojan war.

The moſt ancient writer who ſpeaks of the Sibyl is Heraclitus, about 500 years before Chriſt, after which ſhe and her predictions are mentioned by Ariſtophanes, Plato, Ariſtotle, and who not.

The ſum of the judgment which Fabricius, after a diligent examination, formed upon this ſubject, is as follows:

I. *Nothing is more uncertain than what is related of the number of the Sibyls, whether there was one or more.*

II. *Concerning the Sibyls, ſome think that they were inſpired of God, others that they were poſſeſſed by evil Spirits, others that they were aſſiſted by a ſtrong imagination and enthuſiaſm, and a kind of natural*

---

[b] — αἰεὶ γὰρ Πριάμῳ ἐπεμήνιε δίῳ,
Οὕνεκ' ἄρ' ἐσθλὸν ἐόντα μετ' ἀνδράσιν, οὔτι τίεσκεν.
Il. N. 460.

divination, to which muſt be added a fourth opinion, that theſe oracles were all fraud and human impoſture, and that if any of them were ever fulfilled, it was by hazard.

III. *It ſeems an aſſertion too confident, to aſcribe all the prophecies of the Sibyl and of other Pagans to knavery or chance, and it is more reaſonable to ſuppoſe that ſometimes there might be ſomething præternatural in the caſe.*

IV. *In the time of Cicero there were ſome Sibylline Oracles which were* Acroſtichs, *and which, as Cicero obſerves, were the labour of a plodding impoſtor, and not the prophecy of an inſpired perſon.*

V. *The Romans had Sibylline Oracles in the time of their Kings, which were kept with great care in the Capitol, and conſulted afterwards upon important occaſions. They were burnt with the Capitol,* A. U. C. 670. *and the Romans got a new collection from various places.*

VI. *This ſecond collection was burnt by Stilicho in the time of Honorius.*

VII. *Beſides theſe Collections, there were other Sibylline Oracles made and handed about from time to time.*

VIII. *In Virgil's fourth* Eclogue;

Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas:

Carmen Cumæum *probably means Heſiod's poem, as Probus thinks, and* ultima ætas *is the ſame as* prima, *and means the* Saturnian times, *and the* golden age: *Or,* ultima ætas *means the* laſt, *the* iron age; *and then* venit *is* fuit, præteriit, *is* paſſed *and* gone. *Virgil took nothing here from the Sibylline Oracles.*

IX. *Our preſent collection contains not the books which were offered to Tarquin;*

X. *Nor the ſecond ſet of Oracles which were brought to Rome;*

XI. *Nor thoſe Oracles which were received by the Pagans.*

XII. *Nothing contained in it ought to be admitted as made before the birth of Chriſt, unleſs we can find as ancient vouchers for it.*

XIII. *There are in this collection ſome lines which the author took from old Pagan Oracles, from Homer, Orpheus, and other poets:*

XIV. *But much is taken from the Old and New Teſtament.*

XV. *It contains not all the Sibylline Oracles of which the Fathers made uſe, but it has the greater part of them.*

XVI. *Theſe Oracles were forged in the firſt, ſecond, and third centuries, not by Pagans, or Jews, but by Heretics or orthodox Chriſtians; not by the Fathers, but by ſome unknown perſons.*

XVII. *There was no law which made it a capital crime to read theſe Sibylline Oracles.*

Such is the ſentiment of Fabricius, who would have granted that there is not extant one Sibylline Oracle, upon which we can depend as upon a prophecy fairly uttered before the event, and plainly accompliſhed. I ſee not why we ſhould have a more favourable opinion of thoſe which are loſt.

The great difference of words and verſes which appears even in the ſame paſſages of the Sibylline Oracles, as they are cited by different Fathers, ſhews that the Collections of theſe poems varied much, and that every Librarian thruſt in what he thought proper, and what he had picked up here and there from any dunghill.

Amongſt the defenders of the Sibylline Oracles was Iſaac Voſſius, who wrote a book on that ſubject, a learned book, for he could write no other: but as to judgment, you muſt not ſeek it there. *Credimus*, ſays he, *omnes iſtos libros* (Apocryphos) *a Judæis fuiſſe compoſitos*, DEO IMPELLENTE IPSORUM MENTES *ad ſignificandum gentibus Chriſti adventum. Infinita itaque illi edidere volumina partim ſub Patriarcharum et Prophetarum ſuorum nominibus, quales fuere libri qui olim lecti fuere ſub nominibus Adami, Enochi, Abrahami, Moyſis, Eliæ, Eſaiæ, et Jeremiæ, partim vero ſub nominibus illorum, quorum magna apud*

gentiles eſſet exiſtimatio, veluti Hyſtaſpis, Mercurii Triſmegiſti, Zoroaſtris, Sibyllarum, Orphei, Phocylidæ, et complurium aliorum. De Sibyl. Or. c. 7. It muſt be owned to have been a generous proceeding in Voſſius, to take the weaker ſide on ſeveral occaſions, and to be an advocate for thoſe who ſtood moſt in need of aſſiſtance, in which charitable behaviour he has been, and will be imitated; for this ſort of *charity* alſo *never faileth:* but for inventing and maintaining paradoxes, he never had an equal, except Father Harduin.

Virgil's fourth Eclogue was written, as Biſhop Chandler and Mr. Maſſon have obſerved, when Pollio was Conſul, and the deſign of it was to compliment Auguſtus, or Cæſar Octavianus, as he was then called, and to foretel the birth of a ſon whom his wife Scribonia ſhould bear, who was then with-child: but it proved a daughter, and the infamous Julia. See Chandler's *Def. of Chriſt.* and *Vindicat.* and at the end, a *Diſſertation* of Maſſon.

Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas.

Ultima means here *poſtrema*, and *prima*, the *fifth* and *laſt* in order, and the *firſt*, that is, the returning *golden age*.

— *iſque parentem*
Te, Saturne, refert; tu ſanguinis ultimus
auctor. Æn. vii. 48.

Venit means *is come*: it is contrary to the genius of the Latin tongue to interpret it *abiit*. Collins follows Fabricius in giving this latter ſenſe to the verb: it is pity he did not follow him in many other points, where he would have found him a good guide. *Vĕnit* in the preſent tenſe is, *it is coming*; *vēnit* in the præterperfect, *it is come*, unleſs when it ſtands for an aoriſt, for ἦλθε, and means, *it came*. *Fuit* indeed often denotes what was, and is not, *Fuimus Troes, fuit Ilium*: for, to avoid ſaying that a man was dead, the Romans ſaid *Fuit*, by an *euphemiſmus*.

Cumæum carmen, cannot be the poem of Heſiod, for Virgil calls him *Aſcræum* *ſenem*, and his poems *Aſcræum carmen.* It muſt be, as Servius interprets it, *Carmen Sibyllinum.*

Hence we may ſuppoſe that in Virgil's time there were ſaid to be Sibylline Oracles, which mentioned the return of the golden age, and a renovation of happy days: but whether theſe Oracles were forged by a Jew, or by a Pagan, or whether the ſubſtance of them were ſtollen from the holy Scriptures, or whether Virgil borrowed any of his ideas and expreſſions from theſe Oracles, is a matter of doubt and uncertainty. It cannot be denied that there is a great reſemblance between Virgil's Eclogue and the ſacred prophecies. See Bp. Chandler's *Def.* p. 10, *etc.*

Virgil's fourth Eclogue is a continued prophecy, and he muſt be ſuppoſed, for the ſake of the *decorum*, to have acquired this foreſight one way or other, elſe the poem would appear ridiculous. He gives no intimation that he was himſelf inſpired, I ſpeak of prophetic, not of poetic inſpiration; and father Heſiod was no predicter of future events, ſo that from him he could not pretend to learn it. Whence then could he feign to have it, but from *old Oracles*, from the *Cumæum carmen*? If he had ſet up on this occaſion for a prophet, he would have ſpoiled his compliment; it was better to repreſent himſelf as only an interpreter of ancient prophecies, which he adorned with the graces of Latin poeſy: this gave the Eclogue an air of importance and authority.

He pronounces that the *Golden Age* ſhould commence under Auguſtus, and at the birth of his ſon, and ſhould be brought to perfection when the young hero ſhould arrive to manhood, and when his father (as the Reader was left to ſuppoſe) was returned to heaven, and become one of the celeſtial Gods.

Virgil has touched upon the ſame ſubject in other places: let us compare them together.

He declares, *Georg*. i. 24. that Auguſtus, when he ſhould leave the earth, would become a God, one of the *Dii majorum gentium.*

Tuque adeo, quem mox quæ ſint habitura deorum
Concilia, incertum eſt; etc.

And 503.

Jampridem nobis cæli te regia, Cæſar,
Invidet.

He intimates, ℣ 500, that Auguſtus ſhould reſtore peace and happineſs, and that he was intended

— *everſo ſuccurrere ſæclo.*

Again in the vi. *Æneis*, the *Sibyl*, the *Cumæan Virgin* and *propheteſs*, leads Æneas to Elyſium, where he learns that Auguſtus ſhould ariſe and bring with him the *Golden Age.* 792.

Hic vir, hic eſt, tibi quem promitti *ſæpius audis:*
Auguſtus Cæſar, Divi genus: aurea condet
Sæcula qui rurſus Latio.

promitti, that is, *foretold* by the Gods and their prophets.

And again, 799.

Hujus in adventum jam nunc et Caſpia regna
Reſponſis *horrent divûm* —

My inference from theſe things is that Virgil by *Cumæum Carmen* meant a Sibylline Oracle, but I ſay not that he took any thing thence, beſides a renovation and a golden Age.

Virgil certainly paid no ſincere regard to the Sibyl, and to her predictions. The Epicurean philoſophy, in his days, had debauched the Wits and the polite world, and he, as well as his friend Horace, was infected with it; but Virgil ſaw plainly that the Atheiſtical Syſtem would make a poor figure in heroic poetry, and therefore has introduced it ſparingly and obliquely. They who deny his Epicureiſm are perſons with whom it would be a folly to diſpute.

Not only the Sibylline Oracles are to be rejected, but there is reaſon to ſuſpect *the Orphic verſes*, and alſo ſome few of the Fragments of ancient Poets produced by the Fathers, to have been forged or interpolated by Jews or Chriſtians. Such are the Orphic verſes cited by Juſtin. *Cohort*. § 15; and by others;

Φθέγξομαι οἷς θέμις ἐστὶ — etc.

Cudworth declared his doubts concerning them; *Intell. Syſt.* p. 300. See alſo Le Clerc *Hiſt. Eccl.* p. 692. *Les Peres, au moins* Clement Alexandrin, *ſavoient bien que l'on avoit attribué pluſieurs choſes à* Orphée, *qui n'en étoient point, et l'on a ſujet de doubter qu'ils cruſſent bien aſſurément que le paſſage de l'unité de Dieu fût de lui. Ils ont pu le citer, contre ceux qui pouvoient croire qu'il en étoit effectivement, par un raiſonnement, dont les Philoſophes même ſe ſervent, faute de plus propres à perſuader ceux, à qui ils ont à faire, et dont ils diſent*; valeat quantum poterit valere. *Le Clerc*, Bibl. Choiſ. xxvii. 438.

In Euſebius *Præp. Evang.* xiii. 12, theſe Orphic verſes are to be found, as they were produced by Ariſtobulus, An *Oracle* of Apollo cited by Juſtin, *Cohort.* § xi. and by *Porphyry*, in Euſebius *Præp. Evang.* ix. 10. ſays;

Μοῦνοι Χαλδαῖοι σοφίην λάχον, ἠδ' ἄρ' Ἑβραῖοι,
Αὐτογένεθλον ἄνακτα σεβαζόμενοι Θεὸν ἁγνῶς.

Chaldæo Hebræoque unis ſapientia ceſſit,
Qui caſto æternum venerantur Numen honore.

Here the Pagans and Porphyry were the dupes, who took this for a ſacred oracle. Juſtin and Euſebius ſeem to uſe it as an *argumentum ad hominem.* Juſtin reads Θεὸν αὐτόν.

Some have ſuſpected, but without ſufficient reaſon, this book of Porphyry to be forged. See a Diſſertation in Le Clerc, *Bibl. Choiſ.* xiii. 178. which well deſerves to be peruſed. The author, whom I take to have been Le Clerc himſelf, acts the part of a Moderator between Fontenelle, or Van Dale, and their Antagoniſt, and upon the whole is moſt inclined to ſide with the former, though not in every thing. He blames the latter for uſing *figures* of *rhetoric* inſtead of *reaſons*, treating Van Dale and Fontenelle as *Socinians*, ſetting the Mob at them, and ſuch ſort of *pauvretez*. But as great guns are the *Ratio ultima Regum*, ſo theſe are the *Ratio ultima Diſputatorum*, and ſupply the want of ammunition: and yet it is not altogether fair and honourable war; it is ſhooting chewed bullets and glaſs bottles.

Cæterum, ſays Le Clerc, *notatu digniſſimum eſt hoc Oraculum, quod neque a Judæo, neque a Chriſtiano, neque etiam ab Ethnico e vulgo fingi potuit.* Oper. Phil. tom. ii. in Indice, Hebræi.

Yet it might be made by ſome fantaſtical Pagan, who entertained a favourable opinion of the Chaldæans and of the Jews; or rather by ſome Jew, who was not very ſcrupulous, and who might join the Chaldæans to the Jews, thinking it would remove the ſuſpicion that the Oracle was framed by a Jew: he might alſo give this honour to the Chaldæans for the ſake of his father Abraham, who was a Chaldæan. Or it might be the work of ſome old Heretic, or of ſome fooliſh Chriſtian. It ſeems to have been forged in the ſame ſhop where the Orphic verſes before-mentioned were fabricated: No one knew God, ſays this Orpheus,

Εἰ μὴ μουνογενής τις ἀπορρὼξ φύλου ἄνωθεν
Χαλδαίων. —
Aſt aliquis tantum Chaldæo a ſanguine cretus.

By whom, ſays Clemens, he means Abraham, or his ſon, *Strom.* v. p. 723. Clemens obſerves that Orpheus borrowed his thoughts and expreſſions from the Scriptures, and ſo far he is certainly in the right.

An Oracle of Apollo in Lactantius *de Falſ. Rel.* i. 7. ſays,

Οὔνομα μηδὲ λόγῳ χωρούμενον, ἐν πυρὶ ναίων,
Τουτὶ Θεός· μικρὰ δὲ Θεοῦ μερὶς ἄγγελοι ἡμεῖς.
Nomen ne verbo quidem capiendum, in igne
habitans,
Hoc Deus eſt: modica autem Dei portio Angeli nos.

Made by a Jew, or a Chriſtian.

There are more of the ſame ſtamp in Lactantius, and alſo Sibylline Oracles bearing the moſt manifeſt marks of impoſture.

Juſtin *Cohort.* § 16, and others after him, give us theſe Sibylline verſes, which teach the unity of God, and condemn idolatry, and ſacrifices, and exhort to the love of God, and are altogether in the language of the Scriptures, and carry their own confutation along with them:

Εἷς Θεὸς ὃς μόνος ἐστὶν ὑπερμεγέθης, ἀγένητος,
Παντοκράτωρ, ἀόρατος, ὁρώμενος αὐτὸς ἅ-
    παντα·
Αὐτὸς δ' οὐ βλέπεται θνητῆς ὑπὸ σαρκὸς ἁπάσης.

Unus Deus, qui ſolus eſt, ter maximus, in-
    creatus,
Omnipotens, inviſibilis, ipſe videns omnia.
Ipſe autem a nulla videtur carne mortali.

Ἡμεῖς δ' ἀθανάτοιο τρίβους πεπλανημένοι ἦμεν,
Ἔργα δὲ χειροποίητα γεραίρομεν ἄφρονι μύθῳ
    (θύμῳ)
Εἴδωλα ξοάνων τε καταφθιμένων τ' ἀνθρώπων.

Nos autem ab immortalis viis aberraveramus,
Ac opera manu facta colebamus ſtulta mente
Simulacra et ſtatuas[c] *pereuntium hominum.*

Ὄλβιοι ἄνθρωποι κεῖνοι κατὰ γαῖαν ἔσονται,
Ὅσοι δὴ στέρξουσι μέγαν Θεὸν, εὐλογέοντες
Πρὶν φαγέειν πιέειν τε, πεποιθότες εὐσεβίῃσιν·
Οἳ νηοὺς μὲν ἅπαντας ἀπαρνήσονται ἰδόντες,
Καὶ βωμοὺς, εἰκαῖα λίθων ἀφιδρύματα κωφῶν,
Αἵμασιν ἐμψύχων μεμιασμένα καὶ θυσίαισι
Τετραπόδων, βλέψουσι δ' ἑνὸς Θεοῦ ἐς μέγα κῦδος.

Felices homines ſuper terram erunt,
Quicumque diligent magnum Deum, benedicentes
Antequam comedant et bibant, confidentes pietate:
Qui omnia quidem templa abnegabunt videndo,
Et altaria, inanes lapidum ſedes ſurdorum,
Cruoribus animalium contaminata et victimis
Quadrupedum; et reſpicient ad unius Dei magnum decus.

In the fourth line, inſtead of τρίβους, one might read ἀθανάτοιο τρίβου, with ἀπὸ underſtood; which may be tranſlated, *We have erred from the everlaſting path*; but I rather think that ἀθανάτοιο τρίβου means *the path of God*; ἀπὸ τῆς τρίβου τοῦ Ἀθανάτου.

---

[c] Rather *defunctorum.* But I leave the Latin Verſions uſually as I find them, though ſometimes they want emendation.

Ἐγνώρισάς με ὁδοὺς ζωῆς. Pſalm. xv. 11. Τί ἐπλάνησας ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ σου; Iſai. lxiii. 17. Στῆτε ἐπὶ ταῖς ὁδοῖς, καὶ ἴδετε, καὶ ἐρωτήσατε τρίβους Κυρίου αἰωνίους· καὶ ἴδετε ποία ἐστὶν ἡ ὁδὸς ἡ ἀγαθή. Jerem. vi. 16. And the Propheteſs ſays in another place,

— τρίβον ὀρθὴν
Εὐθεῖαν προλιπόντες.

Juſtin in his *Dialogue* takes no notice of the Sibyl; in his *Apology* he mentions her as foretelling the conflagration at the laſt day, and ſaying many good things; and complains that it was forbidden to read her. The *Cohortatio* is thought to ſurpaſs his other works in elegance of diction; but that alone will hardly be a ſufficient reaſon to pronounce it ſpurious, though it may juſtify a ſuſpicion and an heſitation about it. The Benedictin Editor p. 604. ſays, *Cum ſcriberet Cohortationem ad Græ-*

vos Juſtinus, credebat Septuaginta illos Viros, dum pro ſe quiſque ſeparatim incluſi laborabant, magno miraculo in omnibus verbis et ſententiis inter ſe conſenſiſſe. Sed hanc fabulam, nec in prima Apologia, ubi agit de Septuaginta Interpretibus, commemorat, nec in Dialogo illius credendæ onus imponit Judæis: in quo quidem non levis conjectura eſt eam Juſtinum aut miſſam feciſſe, aut ſaltem ſuſpectam habere cœpiſſe. Some will rather conjecture from this, that Juſtin was not the author of the *Cohortatio*; and I could name a friend, well known to the learned world, and a very good judge, who thinks that nothing of Juſtin is certainly genuine, beſides the *Dialogue*, and the *Apologies*. The Benedictin endeavours to prove that the *Cohortatio* is to be aſcribed to him, and contends with Caſimire Oudin, who held the contrary opinion. *Præf.* p. lxviii.

The Sibyl in the Proœm ſays,

Τίς γὰρ σὰρξ δύναται τὸ ἐπουράνιον, καὶ ἀληθῆ
Ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδεῖν Θεὸν ἄμβροτον, ὃς πόλον οἰκεῖ;
Ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἀκτίνων κατεναντίον ἠελίοιο

Ἄνθρωποι στῆναι δυνατοὶ, θνητοὶ γεγαῶτες.

Corporeis oculis etenim quis cernere verum
Æternumque Deum poſſit, cælumque colentem?
Cum neque ſplendentis radiantia lumina ſolis
Suſtineant homines mortales cernere contra.

Socrates in Xenophon has the ſame ſentiment, and ſays that the Deity is inconſpicuous, and that a man cannot look upon the ſun without being dazzled. *Memor.* iv. 3. Theophilus, Minucius Felix, Theodoret, and others have ſaid the ſame thing. Clemens Alexandrinus fancied that Xenophon borrowed it from the Sibyl, *Cohort.* p. 61. and *Strom.* v. 714. But even admitting the antiquity of theſe verſes, and ſuppoſing that they were written in Noah's Ark, it will not follow from the parity of thought, that Socrates or Xenophon had ſeen them, ſince all men, except thoſe who are blind, know, without an inſtructor, that it is impoſſible to look upon the ſun when he ſhines out in full ſtrength. One thing is very plain, that the two firſt verſes, and the word σὰρξ, for *mortal man*, are taken from the Scriptures.

Juſtin *Cohort.* 18. has cited a very ſingular paſſage from Sophocles;

Εἷς ταῖς ἀληθείαισιν, εἷς ἐστιν Θεὸς,
Ὃς οὐρανὸν τέτευχε, καὶ γαῖαν μακρὰν,
Πόντου τε χαροπὸν οἶδμα, κἀνέμων βίας.
Θνητοὶ δὲ πολλοὶ καρδίᾳ πλανώμενοι,
Ἱδρυσάμεσθα πημάτων παραψυχὴν 5
Θεῶν ἀγάλματ' ἐκ λίθων τε καὶ ξύλων,
Ἢ χρυσοτεύκτων ἢ ἐλεφαντίνων τύπους·
Θυσίας τὲ τούτοις καὶ καλὰς πανηγύρεις
Τεύχοντες, οὕτως εὐσεβεῖν νομίζομεν.

Unus profecto eſt, unus eſt tantum Deus,
Cæli ſolique machinam qui condidit,
Vadumque ponti cærulum, et vim ſpiritus.
At ducta cæco errore gens mortalium
Commenta cladis in ſuæ ſolatium eſt
Formas Deorum ſaxeas aut æreas,
Aurove ductas fuſili, aut eburneas.
His victimarum ſanguinem, his feſtos dies,
Cum dedicamus, eſſe nos remur pios.

In the ſeventh verſe, ſhould it be,

Ἢ χρυσοτεύκτȣς ἢ ἐλεφαντίνȣς τύπȣς.
Or — — ἢ ’λεφαντίνȣς — ?

These verſes are to be found in Clemens Alexandrinus and in other Fathers, and with ſome variety of readings. See Euſebius *P. Ev.* xiii. 13. p. 680. and the notes of Vigerus. *Though this be ſuch,* ſays Cudworth, *as might well become a Chriſtian, and be no where now to be found in thoſe extant Tragedies of this Poet, many whereof have been loſt, yet the ſincerity thereof cannot reaſonably be at all ſuſpected by us, it having been cited by ſo many of the ancient Fathers in their writings againſt the Pagans, as particularly Juſtin Martyr, Athenagoras, Clemens Alexandrinus, Euſebius, Cyril, and Theodoret, of which number Clemens tells us, that it was atteſted likewiſe by that ancient Pagan Hiſtoriographer Hecatæus.* Intell. Syſt. p. 363.

Hecatæus, whom Joſephus commends, *Contr. Apion.* i. 22. is ſaid to have lived in the time of Alexander the Great, and to have converſed much with the Jews, and he might have been a kind of proſelyte, or half-Jew. Le Clerc ſuſpects that this book of Hecatæus might have been forged by the Jews. *Bibl. Choiſ.* viii. 392. Athenagoras only cites the two firſt verſes of this fragment: it is ſtrange that he ſhould not have produced the reſt, if he ever ſaw it, which made ſo much for his purpoſe. Some may think it improbable that Sophocles ſhould venture to attack the Gods and the religious ceremonies of his own country in ſo open a manner; but theſe verſes are not, like thoſe of the Sibyl, in the ſtyle of the Scriptures, and it is certain that in the Greek Comedies and Tragedies there are many bold ſtrokes againſt the fabulous and popular religions; and Clemens Alexandrinus, *Strom.* v. p. 691, produces paſſages out of Euripides, Plato, and Zeno, which are very remote from the vulgar notions concerning the Gods. The Fathers have taken great pains to collect ſuch teſtimonies, for which we are much obliged to them.

Juſtin, *Cohort.* 38. cites an Oracle, which ſeems to be a Jewiſh or a Chriſtian trifle, in which it is ſaid that God

— πρῶτον πλάσας μερόπων, Ἀδὰμ δὲ καλέσας.

Qui primum mortalem effinxit, Adamque vocavit.

Juſtin, in the book *de Monarchia*, if it be his, produces a paſſage from *Philemon*, which others aſcribe to *Menander*, wherein are theſe lines:

Δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἄνδρα χρήσιμον καθεστάναι,
Μὴ παρθένους φθείροντα; καὶ μοιχώμενον,
Κλέπτοντα, καὶ σφάζοντα χρημάτων χάριν,
[Τἀλλότρια βλέποντα, κἀπιθυμοῦντα
Ἤτοι γυναικὸς, πολυτελοῦς ἢ δώματος,
Ἢ κτήσεως, παιδός τε, παιδίσκης θ' ἁπλῶς,
Ἵππων, βοῶν τὸ σύνολον, ἢ κτηνῶν. τί δή;]
Μηδὲ βελόνης ἐν ἄμμ' ἐπιθυμῇς, Πάμφιλε.

Probum eſſe namque oportet omnino virum,
Non inferentem ſtupra nuptæ aut virgini,
Lucrive cauſa furta vel cædes; neque

[Aliena ſpectantem ac deinde conjugis
Male appetentem, aut ſuperbarum ædium
Aut prædiorum, vel puellæ, aut vernulæ,
Pecoriſve taurûmve aut equûm. Quo hæc
pertinent?]
Acum vel unam haud concupiſcas, Pamphile.

The verſes which I have incloſed in brackets are not in Clemens Alexandrinus *Strom.* v. 720. nor in Euſebius *Præp. Evang.* xiii. 13. nor in the collections of Grotius, or of Le Clerc. They are, I think, the handy-work of ſome Jew, or Chriſtian, and a ſorry imitation of the tenth commandment; and, it may be, an interpolation in Juſtin: Οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον σου· οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ πλησίον σου, οὐδὲ τὸν ἀγρὸν αὐτοῦ, οὐδὲ τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ, οὐδὲ τὴν παιδίσκην αὐτοῦ, οὔτε τοῦ βοὸς αὐτοῦ, οὔτε τοῦ ὑποζυγίου αὐτοῦ, οὔτε παντὸς κτήνους αὐτοῦ, οὔτε ὅσα τῷ πλησίον σου ἐστί· *Exod.* xx. 17.

Τ' ἀλλότρια βλέποντα, κἀπιθυμοῦντα

is not a verſe, nor worth the mending. One might read, Τἀλλότρια βλέποντ', ἢ ἐπιθυμούμενον —

He alſo cites ſome verſes from *Æſchylus*;

Χώριζε θνητῶν τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ μὴ δόκει
Ὅμοιον σαυτῷ σάρκινον καθεστάναι. — etc.
Πάντα δύναται γάρ· δόξα δ' ὑψίστου Θεοῦ.

Deum amoveto longius mortalibus,
Nec tibi parem eſſe, carne amictum, finxeris. ---
Namque omnia poteſt: laus Dei eſt altiſſimi.

This paſſage is alſo to be found with ſome various readings in Clemens *Strom.* v. 727.

The laſt line has an air of forgery; it is unharmonious, and proſaic, and ſeems to be taken from the Scriptures. In the ſecond line, inſtead of Ὅμοιον σαυτῷ it ſhould perhaps be Ὅμοια σαυτῷ — for the ſecond foot will not regularly admit a ſpondee.

Euſebius, unleſs my memory deceives me, has made no direct uſe of the Sibyl, whence it may be conjectured that he had no great eſteem for her. Dr. Middleton has charged him with approving and juſtifying a very ſilly Acroſtich of the Erythræan Sibyl. *Euſebius has preſerved an Acroſtich.---He tells us however that many people rejected it --- but the truth, adds he, is manifeſt --- for it is agreed by all that Cicero had read this poem. --- Now the ſole ground of this confident aſſertion is* etc. Inquiry, p. 36.

The Father of Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory deſerves not this cenſure, and the Doctor has inadvertently aſcribed to Euſebius ſentiments contained in an Oration, publiſhed indeed by Euſebius, but compoſed by the Emperor Conſtantine. As to the Emperor's judgment, Defend it who will, for I will not: but why ſhould Euſebius be reſponſible for the miſtakes of Conſtantine? See *Conſtantini Orat.* apud Euſebium, p. 700. Edit. Cant. and Valeſius there, and Euſeb. *Vit. Conſt.* iv. 32.

Euſebius cites the Sibyl, *Præp. Evang.* xiii. 13. but in the words of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, whom he tranſcribes.

IX. 15. He produces a paſſage from her concerning the tower of Babel, but he took it, as he informs us, from Joſephus *Ant.* i. 4. who ſays, Περὶ δὲ τοῦ πύργου τούτου καὶ τῆς ἀλλοφωνίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, μέμνηται καὶ Σίβυλλα λέγουσα οὕτως, Πάντων ὁμοφώνων ὄντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων, πύργον ᾠκοδόμησάν τινες ὑψηλότατον, ὡς ἐπὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀναβησόμενοι δι' αὐτοῦ· οἱ δὲ θεοὶ ἀνέμους ἐπιπέμψαντες ἀνέτρεψαν τὸν πύργον, καὶ ἰδίαν ἑκάστῳ φωνὴν ἔδωκαν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Βαβυλῶνα συνέβη κληθῆναι τὴν πόλιν. *De turri autem hac, deque linguis hominum mutatis meminit etiam Sibylla, ad hunc modum dicens: Cum univerſi homines uno eloquio uterentur, turrim ædificarunt quidam excelſiſſimam, quaſi ad cælum per eam aſcenſuri. Dii vero procellis emiſſis turrim everterunt, et ſuam cuique linguam dederunt. Quæ cauſa fuit, ut urbs ea Babylonis nomen acciperet.*

The verſes relating to this ſubject are preſerved by *Theophilus* ad *Autolycum* ii. 31.

Ἀλλ' ὁπόταν μεγάλοιο θεοῦ τελέωνται ἀπειλαί,
Ἅς ποτ' ἐπηπείλησε βροτοῖς, ὅτε πύργον ἔτευξαν

Χώρῃ ἐν Ἀσσυρίῃ. ὁμόφωνοι δ' ἦσαν ἅπαντες,
Καὶ βούλοντ' ἀναβῆν' εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα·
Αὐτίκα δ' ἀθάνατος μεγάλην ἐπέθηκεν ἀνάγκην
Πνεύμασιν· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἄνεμοι μέγαν ὑψόθι
πύργον
Ῥίψαν, καὶ θνητοῖσιν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοις ἔριν ὦρσαν.
Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πύργος τ' ἔπεσεν, γλῶσσαι τ' ἀν-
θρώπων
Εἰς πολλὰς θνητῶν ἐμερίσθησαν διαλέκτους,
Γαῖα βροτῶν πληροῦτο μεριζομένων βασιλήων.

Sed quando magni Dei perficiuntur minæ,
Quas aliquando comminatus eſt mortalibus,
quando turrim fabricarunt.
In terra Aſſyria. Erant autem omnes unius
linguæ,
Et voluerunt ſcandere cælum ſtelligerum.
Statim autem Immortalis magnam impoſuit
neceſſitatem
Ventis. Venti autem magnam et altam
turrim
Ubi dejecerunt, etiam inter mortales diſ-
cordiam excitarunt.
Rurſus ubi turris cecidit, ac linguæ homi-
num
Mortalium in multas diviſæ ſunt dialectos,

Terra mortalibus impleta fuit ſub variis regibus.

In the laſt line perhaps for βασιλήων it ſhould be βασιλειῶν. The earth was repleniſhed with men, and divided into various kingdoms.

Hence it may be concluded that a Sibylline Oracle concerning the tower of Babel was extant in the days of Joſephus, and hence Beveridge makes ſome inferences in favour of the Sibylline verſes cited by the ancient Fathers, which are by no means concluſive and ſatisfactory. *Cod. Can. Illuſtr.* i. 14.

Was the Oracle mentioned by Joſephus in proſe or in verſe? We cannot certainly tell, but it is moſt probable that it was in verſe, and that Joſephus gave us the ſenſe and ſubſtance of it in proſe. Had Joſephus thoſe verſes before him which are preſerved by Theophilus? Beveridge ſays he had, and ſo thinks Iſaac Voſſius; and it may be ſo. But then the verſes ſeem to have undergone ſome alteration afterwards,

terwards, for the Sibyl in Joſephus ſays that from the confuſion of languages the place was called Babylon; the Sibyl in Theophilus ſays it not: the Sibyl in Joſephus ſays that *οἱ Θεοὶ*, *the Gods*, overthrew the edifice; but in the verſes it is Ἀθάνατος, *God*, which may ſeem better to agree with *μεγάλοιο θεοῦ* that went before.

One might conjecture that at firſt it was thus:

Αὐτίκα δ' ΑΘΑΝΑΤΟΙ *μεγάλην* ΕΠΕΘΗΚΑΝ *ἀνάγκην*
Πνεύμασιν, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἄνεμοι μέγαν ὑψόθι πύργον
Ῥίψαν, καὶ θνητοῖσιν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοις ἔριν ὦρσαν.

By this change, Ἀθάνατοι may be the nominative caſe to *ὦρσαν*, inſtead of *ἄνεμοι*, and it ſeems more reaſonable that the *Gods* than the *winds* ſhould ſet the men at variance. It is in a Pagan ſtyle, and yet a Jewiſh Forger might write it, and take the bold liberty to ſay Ἀθάνατοι, meaning *God* and his *Angels*, or *the Angels*. Angels are ſometimes called *Gods*, and in *Geneſis* xi. 7.

whence this account is taken, *the Lord ſaid, Let* us *go down, and there confound their language*, in which words, according to many of the Rabbins, God ſpeaks to his Angels. Joſephus himſelf now and then uſes expreſſions bordering upon Paganiſm.

It is not ſafe to truſt ones memory in things of this kind; but I think that profane authors, though they ſometimes ſay Ἀθάνατοι, for *the Gods*, and make it a ſubſtantive, yet never ſay Ἀθάνατος, ſimply, for *God*, or the *ſupreme God*. The Sibylline Oracles more than once uſe this word in this manner, and ſhew by it that they are not the work of a Pagan.

The ſuppoſition which ſome have made, that *Juſtin Martyr* was guilty of forging the Sibylline Oracles, is groundleſs and perverſe. Juſtin has written his own character in every page of his works, and ſhews himſelf pious, warm, ſprightly, fearleſs, open, haſty, honeſt, inquiſitive, ſincere, and as void of diſſimulation and hypocriſy as a child. Add to this, that he writes like a man who had no turn for ſuch things, and was not only no poet, but not a verſe-maker. But though he was incapable of forgery, he was deluded by theſe forged oracles, and perhaps by his authority led the Fathers who lived after him into the ſame error.

Tatian makes no uſe of the Sibylline Oracles, and only juſt mentions the Sibyl amongſt the writers who were before Homer, and after Moſes. *Orat. contr. Græc.* § 41.

Athenagoras, to ſhew that the Gods of the Gentiles were men, produces ſix verſes from the Sibyl. *Legat.* § 30.

Theophilus gives us no leſs than eighty-four Sibylline verſes, *ad Autol.* ii, the ſame which ſtand in the beginning of the Editions of theſe Oracles, and which are mere patch-work of Scripture-phraſe. When the Greek poets ſaid things conſonant to the holy Scriptures, Theophilus obſerves that they ſtole their knowledge from the Law and the Prophets, *κλέψαντες ταῦτα ἐκ νόμȣ ϗ* τῶν προφητῶν. It is ſtrange that he did not ſuſpect the ſame thing of the Sibyl, whoſe thefts are ſo open and glaring. ii. 37.

The Sibylline verſes cited by the Fathers, and thoſe which are preſerved in our preſent collection, are often the ſame, and always of the ſame ſtamp and value, and liable to the ſame objections. It is a vain thing to receive the one, and reject the other: it is better to defend them all heroically in the lump, and not to do the work by halves, nor make a diſtinction where there is no difference.

Clemens Alexandrinus was learned, and willing to ſhew his learning, and to let the world ſee that he had peruſed all ſorts of authors; and therefore could not poſſibly omit the Sibyl.

He produces theſe verſes (from the Sibyl, though he names her not) in praiſe of the Hebrews, *Cohort.* 60.

῞Οι τινες οὐκ ἀπάτῃσι κεναῖς, οὐδ᾽ ἔργ᾽ ἀνθρώπων
Χρύσεα καὶ χάλκεια, καὶ ἀργύρου, ἠδ᾽ ἐλέφαντος,
Καὶ ξυλίνων λιθίνων τε, βροτῶν εἴδωλα θανόντων,
Τιμῶ-

Τιμῶσιν, ὁσαπέρ τε βροτοὶ, κενεόφρονι βουλῇ.
Ἀλλὰ γὰρ αἴρουσιν πρὸς οὐρανὸν ὠλένας ἁγνὰς,
Ὄρθριοι ἐξ εὐνῆς, αἰεὶ χρόα ἁγνίζοντες
Ὕδασι, καὶ τιμῶσι μόνον τὸν ἀεὶ μεδέοντα
Ἀθάνατον

Qui nuſquam vanis erroribus inducti, hominum opera
Ex ebore argentoque, ex auro denique et ære,
E ſaxis lignoque hominum ſimulacra peremptorum,
Horrent, et quæcumque alii, vaniſſima turba.
At contra puras tollunt ad ſidera palmas,
Mane ubi membra levant ſtrato, quæ virgine lympha
Perſundunt: unumque colunt, qui cuncta gubernat,
Uſque immortalem.

I give this verſion, as I find it in the Oxford Edition, and ſhall not trouble myſelf to mend it. The fifth verſe ſeems to be taken from St. Paul — ἐπαίροντας ὁσίους χεῖρας. 1 *Tim.* ii. 8. Perhaps, πρός γ' οὐρανὸν, for the ſake of metre, and alſo ὠλένας ἁγνοὺς, from ὠλλὼ; for the laſt ſyllable of ὠλένας from ὠλένη is long. In the laſt verſe for Ἀθάνατον, Sylburgius would read Ἀθανάτων, I know not why. This paſſage may be found in the *Sibyll. Or.* L. iii.

Amongſt the Sibylline Verſes cited by *Theophilus* and *Clemens*, are theſe:

Εἷς Θεός ἐστι, βροχὰς, ἀνέμους, σεισμοὺς ἐπιπέμπων,
Ἀστεροπὰς, λιμοὺς, λοιμοὺς, καὶ κήδεα λυγρὰ,
Καὶ νιφετοὺς, κρύσταλλα· τί δὴ καθ᾽ ἓν ἐξαγορεύω;

Unus Deus eſt, imbres, ventos, terræ motus immittens,
Fulgura, fames, peſtes, et luctus triſtes,
Et nives, et glaciem. Et quid ſingula commemoro?

This is taken from the *Pſalms.* Τοῦ διδόντος χίονα —. βάλλοντος κρύσταλλον αὐτοῦ — Χάλαζα, χιὼν, κρύσταλλος, πνεῦμα καταιγίδος — cxlvii. cxlviii.

Minucius Felix mentions not the Sibyl, though he was invited to it by his ſubject,

ject, where he defends the Chriſtians for teaching the doctrine of a conflagration and a future judgment, and appeals to the Poets and Philoſophers who had ſaid the ſame thing. c. xxxiv. etc. I am glad of it, for the ſake of that ingenious and agreeable Author.

The Phrygian Sibyl is ſaid to have been called *Diana*, Ἄρτεμις, and to have uttered theſe verſes at Delphi:

Ὦ Δελφοὶ θεράποντες ἐκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος,
Ηλθον ἐγὼ χρήσουσα Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο.
Αὐτοκασιγνήτῳ κεχολωμένη Ἀπόλλωνι.

O Delphi, Phœbi ferientis qui eminus eſtis
Servi, veni ad vos Jovis expoſitura potentis
Mentem, germano ſuccenſens plurimà Phœbo.

Thus Clemens *Strom.* i. p. 384. and Pauſanias alſo ſays that the Sibyl calls herſelf Herophile, and Diana, and the ſiſter, and ſometimes the wife, and ſometimes the daughter of Apollo. See the notes.

We have here, I think, the fragment of a true old Sibylline Oracle made by a

Pagan. It looks as if it were compoſed by ſome Prieſt, who had a mind to ſet up an Oracle in oppoſition to the Delphic, and to draw the trade to another ſhop.

Pauſanias in *Phoc.* gives us this Sibylline Oracle predicting a defeat of the Athenians, and made, I ſuppoſe, after the event;

Καὶ τότ' Ἀθηναίοισι βαρύστονα κήδεα θήσει
Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης, οὗπερ κράτος ἐστὶ μέγιστον.
Νηυσὶ φέρει πολέμοιο μάχην καὶ δηϊοτῆτα
Ὀλλυμέναις δολεροῖσι τρόποις, κακότητι νομήων.

Ac tum Cecropidis luctum gemituſque ciebit
Jupiter altitonans, rerum cui ſumma poteſtas.
Navibus exitium, et crudelia funera bello
Ille feret, culpaque ducum dabit omnia peſſum.

Dio, or *Xiphiline*, mentions a verſe, pretended to be a Sibylline Oracle, concerning Nero, which was handed about [c] when Nero had burnt the city of Rome;

---

[c] Nero killed his mother, A. D. 59. and burnt the city A. D. 64.

and which, to be ſure, was compoſed after he had killed his mother;

Ἔσχατος Αἰνεαδῶν μητροκτόνος ἡγεμονεύσει.
Ultimus Æneadum matrem necat induperator.

But, ſays the Hiſtorian, it was really fulfilled. Indeed! As if it required divination, to foreſee that ſuch a debauched, miſerable, odious wretch as Nero would in all probability die without heirs, or be cut off by ſome conſpiracy, and that with him the Julian family would be extinguiſhed! Nero married Sporus, upon which one of the Wits of thoſe days obſerved, that it had been well for mankind, *Si pater ejus Domitius talem duxiſſet uxorem.*

—ἕτερον λόγιον, ὡς καὶ Σιβύλλειον ὄντως ὂν, ᾖδον· ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο,
Ἔσχατος —
Καὶ ἔσχεν οὕτως, εἴ τε καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς θεομαντείᾳ τινὶ προλεχθὲν, εἴτε καὶ τότε ὑπὸ τοῦ ὁμίλου πρὸς τὰ παρόντα θειασθέν. τελευταῖος γὰρ τῶν Ἰουλίων τῶν ἀπὸ Αἰνείου γενομένων ἐμονάρχησε. *Hunc verſum, ut vere Sibyllinum, canere cœperunt,*

Ultimus ---

Id quod accidit, ſive vere prædictum divino Oraculo, ſive afflatu multitudinis ex ſtatu rerum qui tum erat: nam is ultimus ex Julii familia, quæ ab Ænea profecta erat, regnavit. Xiphil. p. 180. *ed. Steph.*

I ſhall conclude this poetical Section with an Oracle from the *Anthologia*, and as good an Oracle as the Sibyl ever uttered:

Πρὸς τὸν μάντιν Ὄλυμπον Ὀνήσιμος ἦλθ' ὁ παλαιστής,
Καὶ πένταθλος Ὕλας, καὶ σταδιεὺς Μενεκλῆς,
Τίς μέλλει νικᾶν αὐτῶν τὸν ἀγῶνα, θέλοντες
Γνῶναι· κἀκεῖνος τοῖς ἱερεῖς ἐνιδὼν,
Πάντες, ἔφη, νικᾶτε, μόνον μή τις σε παρέλθῃ,
Καὶ σε καταστρέψῃ, καὶ σε περιτροχάσῃ.

Thus imitated by Auſonius:

Doctus Hylas cæſtu, Phegeus catus arte palæſtræ,
Clarus Olympiacis et Lycus in ſtadiis,
An poſſent omnes venturo vincere agone,
Hammonem Libyæ conſulere deum.

Sed Deus, ut ſapiens, Dabitur victoria vobis
Indubitata quidem, ſi caveatis, ait,
Ne quis Hylam cæſtu, ne quis certamine luctæ
Phegea, ne curſu te, Lyce, prætereat.

THERE is an *Epiſtle* aſcribed to BARNABAS: we cannot certainly know by whom it was written.

The firſt who cites it is Clemens Alexandrinus, who was born about the middle of the ſecond century, and there is a paſſage in it, which ſhews that it was written after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. We may therefore conclude that it was compoſed after A. D. LXX. and before CLXXX, and probably in the firſt century.

He ſays of the Temple; Διὰ γὰρ τὸ πολεμεῖν αὐτοὺς, καθηρέθη ὑπὸ τῶν ἐχθρῶν. νῦν καὶ αὐτοὶ οἱ τῶν ἐχθρῶν ὑπηρέται ἀνοικοδομήσουσιν (ἀνοικοδομοῦσιν) αὐτόν. *Nam quia bellum geſſerunt, ab hoſtibus deſtructum eſt; nunc vero* *ro ipſi hoſtium miniſtri illud reædificant.* xvi. He mentions not this deſtruction, as an event which had juſt then come to paſs, but ſays indefinitely *καθῃρέθη*, as if ſome time at leaſt were elapſed ſince that calamity. There is a great conformity between the ſubject of this Epiſtle and of that to the Hebrews; but a great difference between the Epiſtles, for that to the Hebrews is in all reſpects ſuperior.

Since the author of this Epiſtle, as it now ſtands, diſcovers not himſelf, and gives no internal mark by which we may find him out, and ſince the name of [d] Barnabas might be common to other perſons, or aſſumed on purpoſe, one would willingly take occaſion from hence to aſcribe it to ſome unknown author, rather than to the Apoſtle Barnabas. If it was really the work of St. Paul's companion, there are internal characters in it, which ſhould incline us to judge that he was not at that time under any particular guidance of the

---

[d] *Barnabas*, or *Son of conſolation.*

Holy Spirit. The ancient Chriſtians judged ſo, and received it not as a Canonical book, which ſhews alſo that they were not ſo very credulous, and ſo ready to adopt every thing, as they are imagined by ſome to have been.

Barnabas is ſuppoſed by Clemens Alexandrinus, Euſebius, and many of the Ancients, to have been one of the ſeventy diſciples; Tillemont. *Hiſt. Eccl.* i. 408. and when he is firſt mentioned in the *Acts*, nothing is ſaid to intimate that he was converted after Chriſt's aſcenſion.

When he preached with Paul, the Pagans of Lyſtra took him to be Jupiter, and Paul to be Mercurius, whence it might be conjectured that he looked, and that he was, much older than St. Paul: but I dare not lay a ſtreſs on this argument. Chryſoſtom ſays that he was ἀπὸ τῆς ὄψεως ἀξιοπρεπὴς, that he had an air which commanded eſteem and reſpect. I fancy that Chryſoſtom had the ſame conjecture in his mind, and thought that the Pagans were induced to take Barnabas for Jupiter,

piter, from his amiable aſpect and majeſtic countenance, fit for the *Father of Gods and men.* Upon the whole, there may be room to ſuſpect either that he did not ſurvive the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, or that he was then very old, and *emeritus*, and not likely to write a long and laboured Epiſtle.

It has been ſaid that Barnabas and Clemens Romanus ſpeak not of miracles as being performed in the Church in their time. Suppoſe it to be true, the ſame thing might be obſerved of ſome Epiſtles in the New Teſtament, particularly of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, which were written before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, when St. Paul and ſome other Apoſtles were living, and preaching the Goſpel in various places, *the Lord working with them, and*, as we may juſtly ſuppoſe, *confirming the word with Signs following.*

Barnabas, ch. xii. ſays, ἐποίησε γὰρ πάντα ὄφιν δάκνειν αὐτούς. that is: *God cauſed all ſorts of ſerpents to bite the people of Iſrael in the wilderneſs.* I have ſometimes thought that it ſhould be πυρόεντα ὄφιν. *Num.* xxi. 6. *Miſit Dominus in populum ſerpentes* urentes, *Seraphim*; *ignitos*, as Jerom renders it. The LXX. indeed has θανατοῦντας. We tranſlate it *fiery ſerpents*. Πυρόεντα ὄφιν, in the ſingular, for *fiery ſerpents*, would be an Hebraiſm, as ℣ 7. *Ora ut tollat a nobis* ſerpentem: but the emendation is uncertain. Juſtin Martyr ſpeaking, of the ſame thing, ſays — ἀπλώτησαν αὐτοῖς ἰοβόλα θηρία, ἐχιδναίτε καὶ ἀσπίδες, καὶ ὀφέων πᾶν γένος, ὃ ἐθανάτου τὸν λαόν. *Apol.* i. § 60. which favours the received reading in Barnabas. One would almoſt think that Juſtin took his πᾶν γένος from Barnabas. Le Clerc thinks that he has found a remark in Juſtin's *Apology* borrowed from Barnabas, *Bibl. Choiſ.* iii. 391. The Benedictin Editor of Juſtin is of the ſame opinion, *Addend.* p. 603.

Valentinus, who taught his heretical doctrines about A. D. 140. and might be born at the end of the firſt or the beginning of the ſecond century, ſays; Εἷς δέ ἐστιν ἀγαθὸς· οὗ παῤῥησία ἡ διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ φανέρωσις·

καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ μόνου δύναιτο ἂν ἡ καρδία καθαρὰ γενέσθαι, παντὸς πονηροῦ πνεύματος ἐξωθουμένου τῆς καρδίας· πολλὰ γὰρ ἐνοικοῦντα αὐτῇ πνεύματα οὐκ ἐᾷ καθαρεύειν· ἕκαστον δὲ αὐτῶν, τὰ ἴδια ἐκτελεῖ ἔργα, πολλαχῶς ἐνυβριζόντων ἐπιθυμίαις οὐ προσηκούσαις· καί μοι δοκεῖ ὅμοιόν τι πάσχειν τῷ πανδοχείῳ ἡ καρδία· καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνο κατατιτρᾶταί τε καὶ ὀρύττεται, καὶ πολλάκις κόπρου πίμπλαται, ἀνθρώπων ἀσελγῶς ἐμμενόντων, καὶ μηδεμίαν πρόνοιαν ποιουμένων τοῦ χωρίου, καθάπερ ἀλλοτρίου καθεστῶτος. τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον καὶ ἡ καρδία, μέχρι μὴ προνοίας τυγχάνει, ἀκάθαρτος οὖσα, πολλῶν οὖσα δαιμόνων οἰκητήριον· ἐπειδὰν δὲ ἐπισκέψηται αὐτὴν ὁ μόνος ἀγαθὸς Πατὴρ, ἡγίασται, καὶ φωτὶ διαλάμπει· καὶ οὕτω μακαρίζεται ὁ ἔχων τὴν τοιαύτην καρδίαν, ὅτι ὄψεται τὸν Θεόν. *Eſt autem unus Bonus, cujus fiduciâ eſt ea quæ fit per Filium manifeſtatio, et per eum ſolum poteſt cor fieri mundum, ejecto ex corde omni maligno ſpiritu. Multi enim in eo habitantes ſpiritus, id mundum eſſe non ſinunt. Unuſquiſque autem eorum propria efficit opera, ſæpe non convenientibus inſultans cupiditatibus. Ac mihi quidem videtur cor non eſſe abſimile diverſorio: illud enim perforatur et effoditur*

ditur, et ſtercore ſæpe repletur, cum homines ſe petulanter gerant, et locum nihil omnino curent, ut qui ſit alienus. Eodem modo cor quoque: cum, quamdiu nulla ejus providentia geritur, ſit immundum et multorum Dæmonum habitaculum: poſtquam autem id inviſerit, qui ſolus eſt bonus Pater, ſanctificatum eſt, et luce reſplendet, et ſic qui tali eſt corde præditus, beatur, quoniam Deum videbit.

This fragment is preſerved by Clemens Alexandrinus *Strom.* ii. p. 489. where he ſtands up for human liberty againſt the Valentinians, who were a ſort of Fataliſts, or Predeſtinarians, and thought themſelves to be the only Elect. Obſerve that Valentinus bears witneſs to the authority of the New Teſtament, for he takes paſſages or expreſſions from it to inſinuate and recommend his own doctrines, as *υἱοῦ φανέρωσις — δαιμόνων οἰκητήριον — ἐπισκέψηται — μόνος ἀγαθὸς Πατὴρ — φωτὶ διαλάμπει — μακαρίζεται* etc. — *ὄψεται Θεόν.* See 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. *Rev.* xviii. 2. *Luke* vii. 16. *Mat.* xix. 17. *Luke* xi. 36. *Mat.* v. 8.

He alſo ſeems upon the whole to imitate Barnabas, who ſays, Πρὸ τοῦ ἡμᾶς πιστεῦσαι τῷ Θεῷ, ἦν ἡμῶν τὸ οἰκητήριον τῆς καρδίας φθαρτὸν καὶ ἀσθενὲς — ὅτι ἦν πλήρης μὲν εἰδωλολατρείας, καὶ ἦν οἶκος δαιμόνων — Διὸ ἐν τῷ κατοικητηρίῳ ἡμῶν ἀληθῶς ὁ Θεός· κατοικεῖ ἐν ἡμῖν· πῶς; ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ τῆς πίστεως — *Antequam nos Deo crederemus, erat noſtrum cordis habitaculum interitui obnoxium et imbecillum --- quia erat quidem plenum cultu idolorum, et erat domus Dæmonum, --- Quare in domicilio noſtro vere Deus exiſtit: habitat in nobis. Quomodo? Verbum ejus fidei ---*

Clemens Romanus is an author on whom I made ſome remarks, *Diſc.* VI. p. 207. 2^d edit. I have only this to add: Clemens *Epiſt.* i. 4. ſays, Διὰ ζῆλον ὁ πατὴρ ἩΜΩΝ Ἰακὼβ ἀπέδρα — *Propter æmulationem pater* noſter *Jacobus aufugit* --- whence, I find, ſome perſons have lately diſcovered and concluded that Clemens was a Jew. I think the paſſage will not prove it. Theophilus *ad Autol.* iii. 23. ---

τὰ γράμματα τοῦ θείου νόμου, τοῦ διὰ Μωσέως ἡμῖν δεδομένου. The Law was given to *us*, ſays Theophilus; and yet he had been converted from Paganiſm to Chriſtianity. Therefore when any ancient Chriſtian writers uſe ſuch expreſſions, it is not to be inferred thence, with any kind of certainty, that they were of Jewiſh extraction, or even that they had been proſelytes to Judaiſm. Indeed nothing is more natural than for Chriſtians to ſpeak as if they were Abraham's children; as if the Law, and the Prophets and the Patriarchs belonged to them as well as to the Jews. In the ſame book § 24. Theophilus ſays, Ἀβραὰμ ὁ πατριάρχης ἡμῶν. 94. Δαυὶδ ὁ πρόγονος ἡμῶν. 27. Ἀβραὰμ τοῦ προπάτορος ἡμῶν.

Hermas is cited by Irenæus, who was born about A. D. 120. He is alſo obſerved to have made no mention of miracles; but he had nothing to lead him to it, and his book is taken up with viſions and revelations. I offered a conjecture concerning it, that it was a parable. *Diſc.* VI *on the Chriſt. Rel.*

He mentions a viſion of a formidable beaſt threatning to devour him, from which he was preſerved, and he interprets this of a great tribulation which was to come upon the Chriſtians, and which ſome have applied to Domitian's perſecution. L. i. *Viſ.* ii. § 2, 3. p. 77. *Viſ.* iv. p. 82.

POLYCARP, of whoſe Epiſtle I have taken notice, p. 67. ſuffered martyrdom under Marcus Aurelius with exemplary courage and conſtancy. His death is ſaid to have been honoured with ſome miracles, which are of ſuch a kind, and attended with ſuch circumſtances, that there is ſome reaſon to pauſe, and to doubt of them. But this ſhall perhaps be conſidered in its proper place.

THE *Recognitions* and the *Homilies* of CLEMENS, written, as it is thought, in the ſecond century, contain as much truth as Lucian's True Hiſtory, Ariſteas, Gulliver's Travels, the Lives of ſeveral Monks, of Lazarillo, of David Simple, and of Gill Blaſs. It would not be a reaſonable requeſt to deſire any man to confute this work. It is ſufficient to refer the Reader to the judgment of Cotelerius, p. 607.

I ſhall only produce one paſſage, and none of the worſt, for a ſpecimen. Peter is introduced ſaying, *Quod cum vidiſſet Gamaliel princeps populi, qui latenter frater noſter erat in fide, ſed conſilio noſtro inter eos erat* --- i. 65.

Here this knave of a forger makes Peter, or *Lord Peter*, as he commonly calls him, and the reſt of the Apoſtles mere politicians, who perſuade Gamaliel to diſſemble his religion, and to act the part of a ſpy and a hypocrite.

In the Recognitions, ii. 13. Simon Magus is introduced ſpeaking thus: *Pueri incorrupti et violenter necati animam adju-*

ramentis ineffabilibus evocatam adſiſtere mihi feci, et per ipſam ſit omne quod jubeo. Dr. Middleton thus tranſlates it; *Simon Magus confeſſed to one of his companions, that he wrought all his amazing works, by the help of the ſoul of an* healthy *young boy, who had been violently put to death for that purpoſe, and then called up from the dead, by ineffable adjurations, and compelled to be his aſſiſtant.* Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers etc. p. 67.

Pueri incorrupti animam. In the Greek it was, I ſuppoſe, *Παιδὸς ἀδιαφθόρου ψυχήν.* Juſtin Martyr calls ſuch children *ἀδιαφθόρους*, and Socrates the hiſtorian *ἀφθόρους παῖδας.* Juſtin *Apol.* i. p. 27. *Νεκυομαντεῖαι μὲν γὰρ, καὶ αἱ ἀδιαφθόρων παίδων ἐποπτεύσεις* — *Necyomantiæ enim, et incorruptorum puerorum inſpectiones* --- Socrates iii. 13. *Καὶ τελετάς τινας συνίστασαν, ὡς καὶ σπλαγχνοσκοπούμενοι παῖδας καταθύειν ἀφθόρους* — which Valeſius tranſlates, *Quin etiam nefanda quædam myſteria ab illis excogitata ſunt; ita ut pueros* impuberes *immolarent, extaque eorum inſpicerent* ---

I once told Dr. Middleton, that I was inclined to think that in this place *incorruptus* meant *impubis* rather than *ſanus*. Ἀδιάφθορος, ἄφθορος, *incorruptus*, mean properly *impollutus, expers veneris*; and they are uſed for *impubis*, becauſe children are uſually *impolluti*. παῖδα or κόρην διαφθείρειν is *ſtuprare*. Ἄφθορος, *impubes, impollutus, incorruptus, imberbis*; ſay the Lexica. ἄφθορος παῖς, *puer imberbis* Dioſc. ii. c. 102. Καὶ πολλοί τινες καὶ πολλαὶ, ἑξηκοντοῦται καὶ ἑβδομηκοντοῦται, οἳ ἐκ παίδων ἐμαθητεύθησαν τῷ Χριστῷ, ἄφθοροι διαμένουσι. *Et multi ſexus utriuſque, et ſexaginta et ſeptuaginta nati annos, qui a pueris diſciplinam Chriſti ſunt aſſectati, incorrupti permanent.* Juſtin *Apol.* i. 22. *ed. Th.* ἄφθοροι, *impolluti, expertes veneris, etiam legitimæ. Qui inviolati corporis virginitate perpetua fruuntur*, ſays Minucius, c. xxxi.

Concerning ſuch magical rites, ſee Broukhuſius on *Tibullus* i. 11. 45. and Fabricius *Bibl. Antiqu.* p. 417. 419. and Havercamp's Tertullian, *Apol.* 23. *Si pueros in eloquium oraculi elidunt.* Junius thinks that this relates to the ſacrificing of children, which kind of divination was called βρεφομαντεία, *pædomantia.*

AMONGST the Apoſtolical writers ſome have placed the author of the EPISTLE to DIOGNETUS, which has been uſually aſcribed to *Juſtin Martyr:* See Fabric. *Bibl. Gr.* v. 58, Tillemont (*Hiſt. Eccl.* ii. p. 493.) firſt declared that he was inclined for ſome reaſons, to think it more ancient, and written before A. D. 70. He ſays alſo that a learned man, whom he names not, had been of that opinion. The laſt Editor of Juſtin thinks that they are miſtaken, as to the antiquity of this Epiſtle, and is in doubt whether it ſhould be aſcribed to Juſtin, or no. *Præf.* p. lxxiv. Baratier gives it to *Clemens Romanus*, and Mr. Whiſton to *Timothy.* In this Epiſtle there are many alluſions to the New Teſtament, which Mr. Whiſton has marked in the margin of his Tranſlation, and there is nothing ſaid concerning any miraculous powers and gifts amongſt Chriſtians. It is *opus eximium et præſtantiſſimum*, ſays the Benedictin Editor, and Baratier and Mr. Whiſton are of the ſame opinion. Diognetus, who is called κράτιστος, was, we may ſuppoſe, if he really exiſted, a man of ſome rank. His Honour wanted to be informed of the nature of Chriſtianity, and why this new religion was not made known ſooner, and for what reaſons the Chriſtians expoſed themſelves to perſecution and to death, neglecting the things of this world, and rejecting the religions of the Greeks and of the Jews. To theſe queries our Author replies in a Letter, in which the truth of Chriſtianity is, in a manner, taken for granted, and nothing is urged that was proper to convince and convert an unbeliever; ſo that Diognetus, if he had been moroſe and cenſorious, would have concluded, that this writer had found a new religion, but had loſt ſomething elſe. One would think that the Apologiſt would have mentioned the prophecies of the Old Teſtament accompliſhed in Chriſt, the miracles of Chriſt and of his Apoſtles, and other proofs of the truth and importance of Chriſtianity. Not at all. He begins with ſetting forth the folly of worſhipping images, and thinking them to be real Gods, and this he gives as the reaſon for which Chriſtians rejected the religion of the Gentiles.

The Jews, ſays he, though they worſhip one God, yet offer him ſacrifices, as if he ſtood in need of ſuch gifts, and were to be fed with the ſteam of victims; they are alſo ſuperſtitious obſervers of the difference between food clean and unclean, of the ſabbath, of circumciſion, faſts, feaſts, new moons, *etc.* Therefore we Chriſtians reject the Jewiſh religion.

What he ſays on this head is not only too ſevere upon the Jews, but incautious, and injudicious, and, if it proved any thing, would prove more than he intended, and was aware of, and bear hard upon the Moſaic Law. The ſame defect may be obſerved in ſome arguments of Arnobius upon the ſame ſubject.

Then he proceeds to obſerve that Chriſtians were examples of all that was good, and patient under afflictions and ill uſage; that God ſent his Son to ſuffer for men, to redeem, and to inſtruct them, who, before he came, knew not God, and who were grown very wicked; all which, if intended as a ſufficient proof of Chriſtianity, was little better than begging the queſtion.

He ſpeaks of the Jews, as if at that time they offered up ſacrifices, whence ſome learned men have concluded that he wrote before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem; but the argument is ſcarcely concluſive, eſpecially, when we conſider what ſort of a writer we have to do with. *Sacrificia quidem*, ſays the Benedictin, *Judæi offerre deſierunt poſt urbis et templi excidia. Sed tamen cum author epiſtolæ quid interſit Judæos inter et Chriſtianos exponat, non immerito in Judæis aſpernatur cruenta illa animalium ſacrificia, quæ et Judaici cultus pars erant inſignis, et ſibi per vim erepta Judæi, ſi minus uſu, ſaltem* *animo et voluntate retinebant. Pluribus aliis contigit Judæos eodem modo exagitare.* *S. Phileas Martyr de Judæis ſic loquitur,* Act. Mart. p. 444. “ *Solis Judæis præceptum fuerat ſacrificare Deo ſoli in Jeroſolyma. Nunc autem peccant Judæi in locis aliis ſolemnia ſua celebrantes,* etc. Præf. p. 75.

I cannot believe that this Epiſtle was written by Juſtin Martyr; for Juſtin would have managed the argument better, and have omitted neither the prophecies, nor the miracles. The Author ſeems to have been ſome Gentile converted to Chriſtianity, who had peruſed Juſtin's *Cohortatio ad Græcos.*

Juſtin begins it thus: Ἀρχόμενος τῆς πρὸς ὑμᾶς παραινέσεως, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἕλληνες, εὔχομαι τῷ Θεῷ ἐμοὶ μὲν ὑπάρξαι, τὰ δέοντα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰπεῖν· ὑμᾶς δὲ, τῆς προτέρας ἀφεμένους φιλονεικίας, καὶ τῆς τῶν προγόνων πλάνης ἀπαλλαγέντας, ἑλέσθαι τὰ λυσιτελοῦντα νυνί. *Cohortationem apud vos, Græci, inſtituens, Deum precor, ut mihi quidem apud vos, ut par eſt, dicere contingat; vos autem pri-*

ſtinam pertinaciam relinquentes, et a majorum diſcedentes errore, quæ utilia ſunt in præſentia eligatis. This is an imitation of the *exordium* in the oration of *Demoſthenes* for *Cteſiphon:* and as Juſtin imitates Demoſthenes, ſo the writer of the Epiſtle imitates Juſtin — παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, τοῦ καὶ τὸ λέγειν καὶ τὸ ἀκούειν ἡμῖν χορηγοῦντος, αἰτοῦμαι δοθῆναι, ἐμοὶ μὲν, εἰπεῖν οὕτως, ὡς μάλιστα ἂν ἀκοῦσαί [ἀκούσαντά] σε βελτίω γενέσθαι· σοί τε [δὲ] οὕτως ἀκοῦσαι, ὡς μὴ λυπηθῆναι τὸν εἰπόντα. *Peto a Deo, qui et loquendi et audiendi nobis facultatem ſuppeditat, ut ab eo detur, mihi quidem, ita verba facere ut in primis contingat, te, poſtquam audieris, meliorem evadere; et tibi, ita audire, ut triſtitia non afficiatur is qui verba fecerit.*

This is ſaid well enough;

amphora cœpit
Inſtitui; currente rota, cur urceus exit?

The Epiſtle has a few chaſms, but there ſeems to be only a little of it that is loſt. It was perhaps an Exerciſe, or Declamation,

tion, addreſſed to a great man, with whom the author had no acquaintance; as ſome modern Epiſtles to the Pope, and to Lewis the fourteenth, which were never preſented.

AS I have had occaſion to mention Tillemont, and ſhall probably often cite him hereafter, I take this opportunity to own my obligations to him for his uſeful and laborious collections. After this due reſpect and acknowledgment, I hope it will be permitted to make a few obſervations which may do others ſome good, and can now do him no harm, nor deſtroy the peace which I believe he enjoys in a better world.

His Hiſtory of the Emperors is very valuable; but he has filled his other books with an account of trifling, abſurd, ridiculous miracles.

He never affirms facts without vouchers, but he often makes uſe of bad ones in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and builds upon a ſandy foundation, upon the teſtimony of forgers, fanatics, and of interested perſons, who write in their own behalf, and want to diſcredit their adverſaries.

He commonly proceeds upon a ſuppoſition that they who have obtained the honour of *Eccleſiaſtical knighthood*, and are called *Saints*, are all excellent men, and entirely to be truſted, and that all they who were, or were accounted *heterodox*, are to be little regarded, and held in bad eſteem.

He ſeems to have been a pious, humble, meek and modeſt, as well as a very learned and accurate man; and yet he cannot forbear inſulting Proteſtant writers as heretics, even thoſe to whom he and the Chriſtian world had great obligations, as Uſher, Pearſon, *etc.* He takes all opportunities, and ſometimes goes out of his way to ſeek opportunities of inculcating the horrible doctrine that the very beſt of Pagans, heretics, and ſchiſmatics are condemned to ſuffer eternal tortures.

Speaking of young Tiberius, who was murdered by order of the Emperor Caius, and compelled by the ſoldiers, as Philo relates it, to thruſt a ſword into his own body, he concludes the melancholy tale with this reflexion, --- *Thus by his own hand he ended his miſerable life, to begin another the miſery of which will never end.* Hiſt. des Emp. i. p. 142. Obſerve that this unhappy youth was then but nineteen years of age, that he had been bred up at court under Tiberius, in a ſort of genteel priſon, that probably he had never heard Chriſtianity even mentioned, and that Hiſtory relates no one bad thing concerning him: So that the Pagan ignorance of this poor child was altogether invincible, and might have been thought ſufficient to qualify him at leaſt for Purgatory.

Tantum relligio potuit ſuadere malorum!

It is remarkable that in the little edition of Tillemont the paſſage ſtands thus --- *he ended his miſerable life.* what follows was added afterwards in the *Quarto edit.*

whence we may learn that the good man, as he grew older, grew more uncharitable in his religious notions. The apophthegm of Horace is not always true,

Lenit albeſcens animos capillus.

The hoary heads of ſome perſons are like mount Ætna, where the ſnow and the fire dwell together in ſtrict friendſhip.

Sed, quamvis nimio fervens exuberet æſtu,
Scit nivibus ſervare fidem ——

Claudian *Rapt. Proſ.* i. 165.

Theſe are ſome of the doctrines which have unhappily helped to propagate Atheiſm or Deiſm, and have made many a man ſay to himſelf, *If this be Chriſtianity, let my ſoul be with the philoſophers.*

The old Chriſtians were more charitable, and had nobler ſentiments of the Divine Benignity. Juſtin Martyr, in his *Apology* i. 46. ſpeaks handſomely of Socrates and of other worthy men in the Pagan world, and repreſents them as a ſort of Chriſtians, and doubtleſs enter-

tained favourable thoughts of their future ſtate. Τὸν Χριστὸν πρωτότοκον τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶναι ἐδιδάχθημεν, καὶ προεμηνύσαμεν λόγον ὄντα, οὗ πᾶν γένος ἀνθρώπων μετέσχε· καὶ οἱ μετὰ λόγου βιώσαντες, Χριστιανοί εἰσι, κἂν ἄθεοι ἐνομίσθησαν. οἷον ἐν Ἕλλησι μὲν Σωκράτης καὶ Ἡράκλειτος, καὶ οἱ ὅμοιοι αὐτοῖς — ὥστε καὶ οἱ προγενόμενοι ἄνευ λόγου βιώσαντες, ἄχρηστοι καὶ ἐχθροὶ τῷ Χριστῷ ἦσαν, καὶ φονεῖς τῶν μετὰ λόγου βιούντων· οἱ δὲ μετὰ λόγου βιώσαντες, καὶ βιοῦντες, Χριστιανοὶ καὶ ἄφοβοι, καὶ ἀτάραχοι ὑπάρχουσι. *Chriſtum primogenitum Dei eſſe ac Rationem illam, cujus omne hominum genus particeps eſt, didicimus, et ſupra declaravimus. Et qui cum ratione vixerunt, Chriſtiani ſunt, etiamſi athei exiſtimati ſint; quales apud Græcos fuere Socrates et Heraclitus, iiſque ſimiles --- Similiter qui olim abſque ratione vixere, improbi et Chriſto inimici fuere, et eorum qui cum ratione vivebant, homicidæ. Qui vero cum ratione vixerunt et vivunt, Chriſtiani ſunt, atque impavidi atque intrepidi.* Ed. Pariſ. 1742. Now turn to the Preface, *pag.* xxxii. and ſee the Benedictin Editor, fighting for a Theological Syſtem which has nothing at all to do with an edition of Juſtin, and taking great pains to clear the good Father from the ſhameful imputation of ſuppoſing that a virtuous Pagan might be ſaved, as well as a Monk. What will the Benedictin ſay for Clemens Alexandrinus? This learned and good-natured Father was of opinion that Chriſt and his Apoſtles preached the Goſpel in *Hades* to the dead, and that the ſouls which repented and believed were received to favour: ἐπεὶ σωτήριοι, καὶ παιδευτικαὶ αἱ [a] κολάσεις τοῦ Θεοῦ, εἰς ἐπιστροφὴν ἄγουσαι, καὶ τὴν μετάνοιαν τοῦ ἁμαρτωλοῦ μᾶλλον ἢ τὸν θάνατον αἱρούμεναι· καὶ ταῦτα καθαρώτερον διορᾶν δυναμένων τῶν σωμάτων ἀπηλλαγμένων ψυχῶν, κἂν πά-

---

[a] Διαφέρει δὲ τιμωρία καὶ κόλασις· ἡ μὲν γὰρ κόλασις τοῦ πάσχοντος ἕνεκά ἐστιν· ἡ δὲ τιμωρία τοῦ ποιοῦντος· ſays Ariſtotle. In Xenophon. *Oecon.* terra κολάζεται, i. e. *emendatur.* See A. Gellius vi. 14. Θεὸς δὲ οὐ τιμωρεῖται· ἔστι γὰρ ἡ τιμωρία, κακοῦ ἀνταπόδοσις· κολάζει μέντοι πρὸς τὸ χρήσιμον καὶ κοινῇ καὶ ἰδίᾳ τοῖς κολαζομένοις. Clemens *Strom.* vii. p. 895. Origen was of the ſame opinion, and perhaps carried it ſomewhat farther.

θεσιν ἐπισκοτῶν), διὰ τὸ μηκέτι ΕΠΙΠΡΟΣΘΕΣΘΑΙ σαρκίῳ. *Sunt enim ſalutares, et quæ erudiunt, Dei caſtigationes adducentes ad converſionem, et potius pœnitentiam peccatoris eligentes quam mortem: idque præcipue cum poſſint animæ purius perſpicere, quæ ſunt liberæ a corporibus, etiamſi obſcurentur perturbationibus, eo quod non ſe amplius eis opponat et impediat caruncula.*

I think it ſhould be, --- ἐπιπροσθεῖσθαι σαρκίῳ, *obnubilari*, from ἐπιπροσθέω. *For the corrections of God are ſalutary, and inſtructive, leading to amendment, and preferring the repentance to the death of a ſinner; and ſouls in their ſeparate ſtate, though obumbrated with perturbations, yet have a clearer diſcernment, than they had whilſt they were in the body, as they are no longer clouded and encumbered with the fleſh.* Strom. vi. p. 764. See alſo p. 794. and the notes.

In the Epistles of Ignatius there is a harſhneſs of ſtyle, but a lively ſpirit, and a noble enthuſiaſm, eſpecially in that to the Romans.

He tells the *Epheſians* that he had a deſign to write them another letter, and to inſtruct them in ſome points, *μάλιστα ἐὰν ὁ Κύριός μοι ἀποκαλύψῃ*, *eſpecially if the Lord ſhould reveal* any thing *to me.* Whence it ſeems not improbable that he had been favoured with ſome revelations. xx.

The ſame inference may be made from theſe words to the *Philadelph.* vii. *When I exhorted you to adhere to your Biſhop, Preſbyters, and Deacons, ſome of you ſuſpected that I had been informed of diſſentions amongſt you,* μάρτυς δέ μοι ἐν ᾧ δέδεμαι, ὅτι ἀπὸ σαρκὸς ἀνθρωπίνης οὐκ ἔγνων· τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ἐκήρυσσεν λέγων τάδε· Χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε. *Teſtis autem mihi is eſt, in quo vinctus ſum, quod a carne humana non cognoverim; ſed Spiritus annunciavit,*

nunciavit, dicens iſta; Sine Epiſcopo nihil facite.

Ad Rom. vii. Ζῶν γὰρ γράφω ὑμῖν, ἐρῶν τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν. ὁ ἐμὸς ἔρως ἐσταύρωται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ, πῦρ φιλόϋλον· ὕδωρ δὲ ζῶν, καὶ λαλοῦν ἐν ἐμοὶ, ἔσωθέν μοι λέγον, δεῦρο πρὸς τὸν πατέρα. *Vivens enim ſcribo vobis, amore captus moriendi. Meus amor crucifixus eſt; et non eſt in me ignis amans materiæ. Sed aqua vivens et loquens in me, intus mihi dicit; Veni ad Patrem.*

There is in this ſomething very ſublime and pathetic. The expreſſion ὕδωρ λαλοῦν, reſembles the *vocales undæ* which inſpired the Poets and Prophets. Statius *Silv.* i. ii. 6.

Et de Pieriis vocalem fontibus undam.

An Oracle of Apollo Delphicus given to Julian, and preſerved by Cedrenus:

Εἴπατε τῷ βασιλεῖ, χαμαὶ πέσε δαίδαλος αὐλά.
Οὐκέτι Φοῖβος ἔχει καλύβαν, οὐ μάντιδα δάφνην,
Οὐ παγὰν λαλέουσαν, ἀπέσβετο καὶ λάλον ὕδωρ.

Dicite regi, humi cecidit elegans aula.
Non amplius Phœbus habet caſam, non vaticinatricem laurum,
Non fontem loquentem, extincta eſt etiam garrula aqua.

In theſe verſes, which, to do them juſtice, are elegant, Apollo, to raiſe Julian's compaſſion, deplores the ſilence of his Oracles and of the *ſpeaking ſtreams.* In the firſt line read βασιλῆι.

Anacreon, xiii.

Οἱ δὲ Κλάρου παρ' ὄχθαις
Δαφνηφόροιο Φοίβου
Λάλον πιόντες ὕδωρ
Μεμηνότες βοῶσιν.

Nec non aquam bibentes
Apollinis loquacem
Ripis Clari, furore
Acti ſubinde clamant.

Vetus Interpres (ſays Cotelerius) Et non eſt in me ignis amans aliquam aquam: ſed vivens et loquens eſt in me. *Hoc eſt Græce;* Καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ πῦρ φιλοῦν τι ὕδωρ ζῶν δὲ καὶ λαλοῦν, *aut* λαλούμενον ἐν ἐμοί. In Interpolatâ, Καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ πῦρ φι-

λοῦν τι· ὕδωρ δὲ ζῶν, ἀλλόμενον ἐν ἐμοί. Et non eſt in me ignis qui aliquid amet: ſed aqua viva, intra me ſaliens. *Ex antiquo Interprete*; Et non eſt in me, aqua autem alia viva manet in me. *Legebat quippe* ἄλλο *et* μένει, *loco* ἀλλόμενον: *et omiſit quæ non intelligebat. Apud Metaphraſtem, quem ſequuntur Græci in Menæo*; Οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ πῦρ φιλόϋλον· ὕδωρ δὲ μᾶλλον ζῶν καὶ λαλοῦν ἐν ἐμοί. Et non eſt in me ignis amans materiæ: aqua vero potius vivens et loquens in me. *Perplaceret mihi*; Καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ πῦρ φιλόϋλον· ὕδωρ δὲ ζῶν, καὶ ἀλλόμενον ἐν ἐμοί. *Nam* φιλόϋλον *Jolianus Ignatii interpolati codex retinuit.* ἀλλόμενον *autem confirmatur per illud Johannis* iv. 14. τὸ ὕδωρ ὃ δώσω αὐτῷ γενήσεται ἐν αὐτῷ πηγὴ ὕδατος ἀλλομένου εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον. Aqua quam ego dabo ei, fiet in eo fons aquæ ſalientis in vitam æternam. *Græci conjunctim*; Οὐκ ἔχεις πῦρ φιλόϋλον ἐν σοὶ, Ἰγνάτιε· ὕδωρ δὲ ζῶν μᾶλλον καὶ λαλοῦν, δεῦρο πρὸς τὸν πατέρα· ὕδωρ τὸ ἀλλόμενον, τὸ ἐκ ζωῆς εἰς ζωὴν μετοχετεῦον ἡμᾶς.

Le Clerc ſays, *Eſt in Exemplari Græca, πῦρ φιλόϋλον. Ignis materialis eſt φιλόϋλος,* amans materiæ; *quâ nempe alitur. Sed ſpiritualis ignis, quo urebatur Ignatius,* materiæ, *hoc eſt, rerum corporearum, amans non erat. Quod eſt nonnihil coactum, ut et ſequentia de* aquâ in eo loquente. *Sed ſancti viri ſermo refertus eſt ejuſmodi violentis adluſionibus.*

The λαλοῦν ὕδωρ muſt not be altered: it is ſufficiently confirmed by the citations of Cotelerius in this very note where he is inclined to reject it; and it is more elegant and proper than Le Clerc imagined.

Ignatius, who was a Syrian, and Biſhop of Antioch, was well acquainted with the *Oracle* of *Apollo Daphneus,* and with the *Caſtalian fountain,* which were at his door, and which are frequently mentioned by Eccleſiaſtical Writers. Sozomen in his deſcription of *Daphne* ſays, Ἦν γὰρ ἐνθάδε Δαφναίου Ἀπόλλωνος περικαλλὲς ἄγαλμα, καὶ νεὼς μεγαλοφυῶς τε καὶ φιλοτίμως ἐξειργασμένος — ἐπιστεύετο δὲ παρὰ τοῖς τάδε

πρεσβεύουσι, ῥεῖν αὐτόθι ϗ ὕδωρ μαντικὸν ἀπὸ Κασταλίας τῆς πηγῆς, ὁμοίως τῇ ἐν Δελφοῖς ἐνεργείας τε ϗ προσηγορίας λαχούσης. *Erat enim illic Apollinis Daphnæi pulcherrimum ſimulacrum et templum magnifice atque ambitioſe conſtructum. --- Credebatur etiam ab illis qui iſta colunt et prædicant, aquam illic divinatricem fluere ex fonte Caſtalio, qui idem nomen eandemque efficaciam haberet, quam ille Delphicus.* v. 19.

Ignatius therefore oppoſes to the *ſpeaking prophetic waters* of the Pagans, the *living waters* mentioned by our Lord in *John* iv. 14.. which *ſpeak* better and nobler things than the fabulous and poetic fountains. The Interpolator, who could not put himſelf in the place of Ignatius, and had not the ſame thoughts and images which aroſe in the mind of the Martyr, flung away ὕδωρ λαλοῦν, the *ſpeaking water*, which he underſtood not, and for which he had no taſte, and put in ὕδωρ ἀλλόμενον to make it a cloſer copy from St. John.

In the Interpolated Epiſtle πῦρ φιλοῦντι is abſurd; but φιλόϋλον πῦρ makes good ſenſe. He who in this paſſage, which we have been examining, can prefer the *larger* to the *ſhorter* Epiſtle, muſt be a critic, who, of different expreſſions, likes the worſt the beſt, and ſhould be fed with chaff.

They who contend for the *larger* Epiſtles would do well to weigh one thing, which they never ſeem to think of, namely, that, whilſt they want to ſupport I know not what, they are hurting the reputation of an Apoſtolical Father, whom they have in great eſteem; for if the paſſages which I have already pointed out, and thoſe which others have cenſured, could be ſhewed to be genuine, Ignatius would be much leſs valued, than he is, by men of ſenſe and judgment. But though the ſhorter Epiſtles are on many accounts preferable to the larger, yet I will not affirm that they have undergone no alteration at all.

IGNATIUS ſuffered under Trajan about the beginning of the ſecond century. Here was a good man put to death by a good emperor; but the Pagans then began to perceive that Chriſtianity, if it prevailed, would prove the ruin of their religion, and ſome of them probably perſuaded Trajan to act contrary to his diſpoſition, which was mild and placable. Pliny, in his Epiſtle to that Emperor, ſays that in his province the temples had been in a manner deſerted, ſacrificing left off, and the worſhip of the Gods neglected. Trajan forbad the Chriſtians to be ſought after, and yet ordered them to be puniſhed if convicted. *O ſententiam neceſſitate confuſam! negat inquirendos, ut innocentes; et mandat puniendos, ut nocentes.* --- *Quid temet ipſum cenſurâ circumvenis? Si damnas, cur non inquiris? ſi non inquiris, cur non et abſolvis?* Thus Tertullian, in his *Apologetic*, inveighs, ingeniouſly enough, againſt the inconſiſtency and abſurdity of this ſentence, and has had the good fortune to engage moſt of his readers in the ſame way of thinking; and yet, after all, the Emperor's decree was not quite ſo abſurd as Tertullian imagined. Trajan had no hatred towards the men, and pitied their caſe, but diſliked the religion for the reaſon above mentioned; therefore he was willing to treat the Chriſtians gently, but would neither repeal the laws to which they were obnoxious, nor give them leave to exerciſe their religion freely.

Ignatius expreſſed an earneſt deſire to ſuffer for the ſake of Chriſt, and a great joy at the expectation of it; but it appears not that he raſhly ſought or provoked danger. To him might be [a] applied theſe lines of Lucan, which ſuit him as if they were made for him:

Projeci vitam, comites, totuſque futuræ
Mortis agor ſtimulis.---- Agnoſcere ſolis
Permiſſum eſt, quos jam tangit vicinia fati,

---

[a] Le Clerc, Hiſt. Eccl. p. 566.

Victuroſque Dei celant, ut vivere durent,
Felix eſſe mori.

He ſpeaks of himſelf with modeſty and humility; he exhorts the Chriſtians to live peaceably together, and to pay a high regard to their biſhops and paſtors, and has gone too far in his expreſſions; but it is ſomething of an excuſe for him that the ſtate of the times led him to it. It was to be feared leſt the heretics, who in thoſe days were vile perſons, ſhould ſeduce the unwary; and mutual quarrels might have proved fatal to the common cauſe. A houſe ill cemented, and beaten with the ſtorms of perſecution, could not have ſtood.

In his *Epiſtle* to the *Romans* he deſires them not to interpoſe, and by any ways endeavour to preſerve him from martyrdom, and he ſays that the wild beaſts had feared and refuſed to touch ſome [b] who had been thrown to them, which he hoped would not happen to him. ἃ [θή-ρια] ϗ κολακεύσω συντόμως με καταφαγεῖν, ἐχ ὥσπερ τινῶν δειλαινόμενα ἐχ ἥψαντο[c]. *Quas et blanditiis demulcebo, ut citius me devorent; non ut quoſdám veritæ non attigerunt.* v. So afterwards, when Blandina was expoſed, none of the beaſts would kill her, ſays Euſebius, who took it from an authentic hiſtory of the martyrs of Lions in Gaul. v. 1. In Diocletian's perſecution, Euſebius was eye-witneſs to ſuch a thing; and ſomewhat of this kind is related in the Acts of Perpetua. This forbearance of the beaſts, though it did not ſave the lives of the

---

[b] I know not whether Ignatius had in view any Chriſtian Martyrs, or Daniel who was caſt into the den of lions.

---

[c] In Ignatius and Euſebius it is ἥψαντο. Stephanus reads ἥψατο, which probably is right, becauſe — μὴ θέλῃ follows. But, as to the rule in our Grammars, *Neutra pluralia gaudent verbo ſingulari*, there are abundance of exceptions to it, particularly in the Scriptures. See in the LXX, Geneſ. xlviii. 6. Iſai. lxiv. 3. Zach. xiii. 7. and Matth. vi. 26. x. 21. Marc. [illegible] 13. xiii. 12. Luc. xxiv. 11. Joh. x. 8. Revel. xxi. 4. Homer. Il. Τ. 29.

— μή τοι ταῦτα μετὰ φρεσὶ σῇσι μελόντων.

martyrs

martyrs, yet it animated and comforted the diſtreſſed Chriſtians; it reproved the Pagans for their worſe [c] than brutiſh cruelty, and it might poſſibly be the happy occaſion of converting ſome, who might be inclined to ſay at ſuch a ſight,

> — *non hæc ſine numine Divûm*
> *Eveniunt.*

If the lions had been let looſe upon Ignatius in the amphitheatre, and had retired and left him unhurt, or fawned upon him, the ſpectators might poſſibly have been moved of themſelves, or incited by his friends, who were preſent, to beg the life, or at leaſt the reprieve, of a venerable old man, whom the very brutes had ſpared, and who ſeemed protected by heaven; and ſuch kind of favours were ſeldom refuſed to thoſe aſſemblies. Thus Androcles was ſaved by the good offices of his old and grateful friend, the lion, and had his life, and liberty, and the lion, given to him, at the requeſt of the people. *A. Gellius* v. 14. *Populi*

---

[c] *Mitius inveni, quam te, genus omne ferarum.*

in arenâ præcipuum jus, ſays Lipſius, *et ad ejus voluntatem domini plerumque ſe conformabant.* Saturn. ii. 22. The Emperor, it will be ſaid, had condemned him to the lions. But what then? if the lions would not kill him, the Magiſtrate might, without offence, if he had been ſo diſpoſed, have reſpited the Martyr's death, till the Emperor's farther pleaſure ſhould be known.

It muſt be confeſſed after all, that ſuch wonders are ſomewhat ambiguous, becauſe wild beaſts are not always in a fighting humour, and might be terrified by the ſtrangeneſs of the place and noiſe of the populace, and therefore we find that they ſometimes uſed fire, and whips, and other methods to irritate them; but even theſe methods were tried in vain, ſays Euſebius, ſpeaking of what happened, to his own knowledge.

Joſephus relates that one of the Ptolemy's expoſed the Jews of Ægypt (in the Hippodrome) to be killed by his elephants, whom he had intoxicated with wine, to make them more furious; but the beaſts, inſtead of aſſaulting the poor Jews, turned upon the ſpectators and deſtroyed many of them. This, and ſome terrible appearance, ſo frightened the king, that he acknowledged the Divine interpoſition, and ſet them free, and conferred many favours on them. Joſephus adds, that the Jews of Alexandria kept a day in commemoration of this deliverance. *Contr. Apion.* ii. 5. See alſo *Maccab.* iii. 3, 4, 5. and Prideaux, *Connect.* ii. p. 86. Fol. Ed.[f]

It was not neceſſary that the Chriſtians ſhould be miraculouſly ſaved; the fa[illegible]rs promiſed to them by their Maſter were of another kind: Jeſus Chriſt would not ſave himſelf from crucifixion, but he ſtruck thoſe to the ground who came to ſeize him, and the troubled elements bare witneſs to his dignity and to his innocence. St. Stephen's martyrdom was alſo attended with miraculous circumſtances. It is therefore no inſuperable objection to any wonders which are related to have accompanied the death of the martyrs, that they did not preſerve the ſufferers. If indeed they are not well atteſted, or if they appear to have been of the trifling uſeleſs kind, and void of all *moral import*; if milk inſtead of blood flowed from their wounds, and ſweet odours iſſued from the faggots, and pigeons flew out of their mouths, the caſe is altered, and there is ſome reaſon to doubt of ſuch miracles. So again; if a Monk ſmelt like a civet-cat when he was dead, who ſmelt like a pole-cat when he was alive, this can hardly paſs for a proper and ſufficient proof of his ſanctity.

---

[f] To this it will perhaps be ſaid, that it is no marvel if a *drunken beaſt* turned upon his driv[illegible]

The repeated wiſh of Ignatius was, that he might be torn to pieces and eaten up, that, as he ſays, he might give no one the trouble of paying him funeral rites.

Vota ſuos habuere deos ---

His wiſh was accompliſhed, and of his body very little was left undevoured.

The account of his martyrdom, in the *Patres Apoſtolici* vol. ii. p. 157. has the appearance of being genuine, except the laſt ſection, which contains the *dreams* of his friends, and which might poſſibly be added by another hand. See Le Clerc.

They who reject all the Epiſtles of Ignatius as ſpurious, reject alſo the account of his martyrdom. It is inconceivable, *ſay* they, that Trajan ſhould have ſent an old man, by land, at a great expenſe, attended with ſoldiers, from Syria to Rome, inſtead of caſting him to the lions at Antioch: it is alſo improbable that when he was thus guarded and conducted, he ſhould have been permitted to converſe with the Chriſtians, and to give them inſtructions, and to write Epiſtles, in the ſeveral cities through which he paſſed. The anſwer is obvious:

Trajan ſent him by land, on purpoſe, to ſhew him about, and to make an example of him as of a ring-leader of the ſect, παραδειγματίζειν, and to deter the Chriſtians from preaching and ſpreading their religion; and for the ſame reaſon he ſent him to be executed at Rome, where there were many Chriſtians, and which, as it was the capital of the world, ſo was it the head quarters of all ſorts of religions. *Repreſſa in præſens exitiabilis ſuperſtitio rurſus erumpebat, non modo per Judæam, originem ejus mali, ſed per Urbem etiam, quo cuncta undique atrocia aut pudenda confluunt, celebranturque.* Tacitus *Ann.* xv. 44. Dionyſius Halicarnaſſenſis obſerves that tho' there were ſix hundred nations, which, in a manner, had taken up their abode at Rome, each of which had its own ſacred rites, yet no foreign religion had been publicly received by the Romans, or at leaſt not till they had purged and corrected it, and rendered it conformable to their own.

In the time of Trajan, Chriſtianity had made ſuch a progreſs, that the Romans were jealous, and uneaſy at it.

The ſoldiers who had the cuſtody of Ignatius, made a conſiderable advantage of him, and, as we obſerved before, took money of the Chriſtians for the ſmall indulgence which they ſhewed to their priſoner, and would have been glad that he had written a hundred Epiſtles, if they could have obtained a preſent for each.

TRAJAN had many excellent qualities, and Pope [a] Gregory is ſaid to have prayed his ſoul out of hell, though Tillemont ſeems to give no credit to the ſtory, ſince he paſſes it by in ſilence, and pronounces a ſentence of [b] reprobation upon the Emperor. Amongſt other commendable things which Trajan did, he relaxed the tribute called *Viceſima*, ſo as to make it leſs burdenſome.

---

[a] Bayle's Dict. TRAJAN.

[b] Ses cendres furent receus à Rome en triomphe, dans un char ſur lequel on avoit mis ſon image: et l'on a encore des marques de ce triomphe, ſi lugubre pour tout le monde, et ſurtout pour celui qu'on vouloit relever par ces honneurs imaginaires, et que le vray Dieu puniſſoit dans les enfers — &c. *Hiſt. des Emp.* tom. ii. p. 205.

Dio Caſſius ſays that Auguſtus eſtabliſhed a treaſury for the payment of the army, and upon a deficiency, many ways being propoſed by the Senators, and all of them rejected, he fixed upon this expedient, which ſeems to have been of his own contriving, though he fathered it upon Julius Cæſar, that a *Twentieth* ſhould be paid into the treaſury of all inheritances, and legacies bequeathed by will, from which however he exempted thoſe who were near of kin; he alſo excepted thoſe who were poor, by which I ſuppoſe was meant that when the inheritance was ſmall and under a certain value, and the inheritor alſo was poor, nothing was demanded. See *Dio*, L. lv, p. 566.

Auguſtus contributed largely to this fund out of his own income, and as he had many legacies left him, he muſt have often paid his *Twentieth*. However the Romans, as Dio tells us afterwards, were exceſſively uneaſy at this tax, till Auguſtus by convincing them that a better could not be contrived, and by putting them in fear of ſomething worſe, perſuaded them to be quiet. L. lvi. p. 588.

Thus it continued, and the younger Pliny, a very competent judge, and a very honeſt man, mentions it, not without approbation, as one of thoſe neceſſary evils, which was the leaſt oppreſſive. *The Twentieth*, ſays he, *is a tax tolerable enough, and eaſy to the inheritor, if he is not related to the deceaſed, but very hard, if he is near of kin* and he commends Nerva and Trajan for mitigating this law in favour of new made citizens, who, it ſeems, had been obliged to pay the Twentieth, howſoever related to the teſtator, as alſo for moderating it in ſome other inſtances which deſerve to be peruſed, *Paneg.* ch. 37. etc.

When a perſon died inteſtate, it is to be ſuppoſed that the heir at law was ſubject to the ſame tax, if he came not within the degrees of relation which were exempted, This tribute muſt have amounted to a prodigious ſum; for the Roman empire was of a vaſt extent, the nobility and gentry were very rich, and often had no children to inherit their fortunes, and the arts of flattering the rich by thoſe who were called *Heredipetæ*, *legacy-hunters*, were much practiſed at *Rome*; ſo that many legacies were continually left to friends, to companions in iniquity, to freed-men and paraſites: and this, by the way, ſuggeſts one reaſon, not obſerved by Dio, why much clamour was made at Rome againſt the tax.

What made the taxes in general heavy to the Romans, and to the nations which were in ſubjection to them, was that they were farmed and collected by the Publicans, a ſort of ſharpers, who were troubleſome every where, eſpecially in the remoter provinces, ſo that the Government was forced from time to time to pare their nails, and to browbeat them, and to make laws, in ſome of which they are ſet out in ſorry colours. See *Digeſt.* L. xxxix. *Tit.* iv. 12.

Whether this method deſerves any notice and conſideration, is ſubmitted to thoſe whom it concerns.

THE READER will perceive, without being told it in form, that he has here only part of a work. The reſt may poſſibly make its appearance ſome day; but what is now publiſhed is ſo far at leaſt complete, as to have little dependance upon any thing that may follow.

APPENDIX.

I REFERRED the Reader, p. 118. to the viſions of Rice Evans, as containing ſome things not unworthy of notice. Mr. Warburton has given me the following remarks on the man, and on his predictions; and the [a] Biſhop of Bangor, and he, have been willing to appear as my friends, and my coadjutors in this work.

---

[a] Whoſe Diſſertation on the deſtruction of Jeruſalem is inſerted above, p. 21—33.

IBIT et hoc noſtri per ſæcula fædus amoris,
Doctorumque inter nomina nomen ero:
Forſan et extinctum non ſpernet Patria dulcis,
Forſitan et dicet, Tu quoque noſter eras.
Talibus inferiis placabilis Umbra quieſcet,
Lenibunt Manes talia dona meos.
Interea Labor ipſè levat faſtidia vitæ:
Æterno rectum ſub Duce pergat iter!
Scriptores ſancti, [illegible] et cana Vetuſtas;
Salve, Muſa, nimis blanda tenaxque comes;
Tu puero tener[illegible] lecta ſub annis;
Tune etiam [illegible] futura viro?
Ne tamen æternum, mæſta atq. irata, recede,
Sed raro, ſed [illegible] rogata, veni.
Hæc, Fortuna, tuis non ſunt obnoxia regnis,
Livor in hæc poterit juris habere nihil.

"YOU deſired to have a more particular account of a certain prophecy of one *Rice Evans*, which you have heard ſome of your friends ſpeak of in terms of aſtoniſhment; as I have his Book, which is ſcarce, I am able to give you that ſatisfaction. But it may not be amiſs firſt to let you into the character of the Prophet. Rice Evans lived and flouriſhed in the laſt century, during the time of our civil confuſions. He was a warm Welſhman, and not diſpoſed to be an idle ſpectator in ſo buſy a ſcene. So he left his native country for London; and finding on his arrival there, that *Inſpiration* was all running one way, he projected to make a diverſion of it from the Round-heads to the Cavaliers, and ſet up for a Prophet of the Royaliſts. He did and ſaid many extraordinary things to the Grandees of both parties: and it muſt be owned, he had a ſpice of what we ſeldom find wanting in the ingredients of a modern Prophet, I mean *Prevarication*.

“ *tion.* Of this he has himſelf given us a
“ notable example in the 42^{d} page of his
“ Tract, called *An Eccho from Heaven,*
“ &c. which, becauſe it contains an un-
“ common ſetch of wit, I ſhall tranſcribe.
“ *There are two confeſſions,* ſays he, *ſub-*
“ *ſcribed by my hand in the city of London,*
“ *which if not now, in after-ages will be*
“ *conſidered. The one was made at the*
“ *Spittle, and ſubſcribed with the* right
“ hand, *in the aforeſaid veſtry, before Sir*
“ *Walter Earl; and that is a confeſſion*
“ *made by the inner man, or new man. The*
“ *other confeſſion is a confeſſion of the fleſh,*
“ *called the outward man, or old man, and*
“ *the confeſſion I made before Green [the Re-*
“ *corder] and ſubſcribed with the* left hand,
“ *as the difference in the writing, being*
“ *compared, will make it appear. I know*
“ *the Bench and the people thought I re-*
“ *canted, but, alas! they were deceived.*

“ Well, but this very man has in the
“ 77 and 78 pages of this *Eccho, printed*
“ *for the Author* in 12° *and ſold at his*
“ *houſe in Long Alley in Black Friars,*

" 1653. *ſecond Edition, with additions,*
" a Prophecy which aſtoniſhes all who
" carefully conſider it. It is in theſe
" words.

" *A Viſion that I had preſently after*
" *the King's death.*

" *I thought that I was in a great Hall,*
" *like the ſhire-hall, in the Caſtle in Win-*
" *cheſter, and there was none there but a*
" *Judge that ſat upon the Bench, and my-*
" *ſelf; and as I turned to a window*
" *north-weſtward, and looking into the*
" *palm of my hand, there appeared to me*
" *a face, head and ſhoulders, like the Lord*
" *Fairfaxes, and preſently it vaniſhed*
" *again; then aroſe the Lord Cromwel,*
" *and he vaniſhed likewiſe; then aroſe a*
" *young face, and he had a crown upon*
" *his head, and he vaniſhed alſo; and an-*
" *other young face aroſe with a crown on*
" *his head, and he vaniſhed alſo; and an-*
" *other young face aroſe with a crown up-*
" *on his head, and he vaniſhed alſo; and*
" *another young face aroſe with a crown*
" *upon his head and vaniſhed in like*

" *manner: And as I turned the palm of my*
" *hand back again to me, and looked, there*
" *did appear no more in it. Then I turned to the Judge, and ſaid to him, There*
" *aroſe in my hand ſeven, and five of them*
" *had crowns; but when I turned my hand,*
" *the blood turned to its veins, and there*
" *appeared no more: ſo I awoke.*

" *The interpretation of this Viſion is,*
" *that after the Lord Cromwell there ſhall*
" *be* Kings *again in* England, *which thing*
" *is ſignified unto us by thoſe that aroſe*
" *after him, who were all crowned, but the*
" *generations to come may look for a*
" *change of the blood, and of the name in*
" *the royal ſeat after five Kings reigne once*
" *paſſed.* 2 Kings x. 30.

" [The words referred to in this text
" are theſe, *And the Lord ſaid unto Jehu, becauſe thou haſt done well, &c. thy*
" *Children of the fourth Generation ſhall*
" *ſit on the throne of Iſrael.*]

" The reſtoration of the Monarchy is
" here plainly predicted; together with
" the crown's paſſing from the houſe of

“ Stewart into another family. But the “ Prophet at firſt ſight appears to be “ doubtful about the number of reigns “ before that event. He reckons up in his “ hand only *four* ſucceſſions to the Mo-“ narchy, yet in his ſpeech to the Judge “ he calls them *five*: in his interpreta-“ tion he ſays the change ſhall be after “ the reign of *five* Kings; and yet refer-“ ring, in concluſion, to a text in the “ ſecond book of *Kings*, we are brought “ back again to the number *four*. But “ it is this very circumſtance which “ makes the prodigious part of this af-“ fair. A good gueſſer (who, an anci-“ ent Writer ſays, is the beſt prophet) “ might reaſonably conjecture the Mo-“ narchy, after the ſubverter of it, Crom-“ well, was taken off, would be reſtor-“ ed; and, if it continued in the ſame “ family for *four* or *five* generations, that “ was as much as, in the ceaſeleſs revo-“ lutions of human affairs, could be ex-“ pected. But we ſhall find there was “ ſomething more in this matter. The “ Succeſſion of the Houſe of Stewart,

“ during the courſe of theſe *four* gene-
“ rations, was diſturbed, and that cir-
“ cumſtance our Prophet has diſtinctly
“ marked out. The *four* crowned heads
“ he ſaw in his hand denote Charles the
“ II^d^, James II^d^; Queen Mary, and Queen
“ Anne. They are afterwards called
“ *five*: and ſo they were; for King Wil-
“ liam III^d^ ſhared the ſovereignty with
“ Queen Mary, and reigned alone after
“ her. But he being of another family,
“ when the *ſucceſſion* in the houſe of
“ Stewart is reckoned up, he could not
“ be numbered: ſo they muſt be there
“ called *four*. When the Prophet rec-
“ kons the *reigns*, King William comes
“ in, and then they are called *five*. The
“ key to this explanation is the text he
“ concludes with --- *Thy children of the*
“ FOURTH *generation ſhall ſit on the*
“ *throne*.

“ A great and extraordinary Genius
“ lately deceaſed, ſtruck with this won-
“ derful coincidence, hath written with
“ his own hand in the margin of the

"page, theſe words, *A manifeſt Prophe-*
"*cy*. You know who I mean. But
"every one muſt judge for himſelf, un-
"leſs (which I had rather) you would
"give us your own ſentiments upon
"it."

"But now my hand is in, as you
"have had one of his *viſions*, you ſhall
"have a *dream* too, as he tells it in the
"12th page of the firſt, and the 8th page
"of his ſecond edition. --- *My heart was*
"*for London, and as one Mr. Oliver Tho-*
"*mas preached, Cant.* ii. 10. *Ariſe up, my*
"*love, my fair one, and come away, my*
"*heart was allured with it, that I thought*
"*it was a haſtening of me to London; and*
"*at that time in a dream methought I was*
"*on* Iſlington-hill *by the* water-houſe, *and*
"London *appeared before me as if it had*
"*been burnt with fire, and there remained*
"*nothing of it but a few ſtone walls: but*
"*I made nothing of this dream.*

"Whoſoever reflects upon what we
"are told by Burnet in the *Hiſtory of his*
"*own times*, vol. i. p. 231. of the condition

“ in which the works were put at the
“ *Water-houſe* at *Iſlington*, when the fire
“ of London happened, cannot but think
“ Evans' making this the ſcene of his
“ dream a very unaccountable circum-
“ ſtance. His telling us that *he made no-*
“ *thing of this dream* adds to the credit of
“ his relation.”

IT is obſervable that in the firſt edition printed in the year 1652, Evans reckons up *five*, not *four* young faces in his hand, and he concludes only thus:

All that I apprehend by this viſion is, that after the Lord Cromwell we ſhall have a king again in England.

My thoughts are the ſame with Mr. Warburton's, that the viſions of Evans are a curioſity deſerving to be known, but not a foundation to build any thing upon. If there be in them any forgery, which the difference between the firſt and ſecond editions once inclined me to ſuſpect, they who can detect it will oblige us and many others by the diſcovery.

Evans ſays, p. 16. of Edit. 1652.--- *being perfectly awake --- a voice --- ſaid to me, Go to thy book, whereupon --- I ſuddenly ſtarted up and to the table I went, where my Bible lay open, immediately faſtening my eyes upon* Epheſ. v. 14. *being theſe words, Wherefore he ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light, etc.* The ſame thing he did at other times. Evans, who was illiterate, little thought that he was practiſing a kind of divination in great requeſt amongſt the Pagans, and the ancient Jews and Chriſtians, who had recourſe to their *Sortes Homericæ*, *Virgilianæ*, *Evangelicæ*, and *Biblicæ*. The ſame cauſes produce the ſame effects, and nothing is more like one Enthuſiaſt, Myſtic, Cabbaliſt, or Quietiſt, than another.

ADDENDA.

Pag. 205. l. ult. *into Ægypt*. Add: Afterwards *the Lord ſaid to Moſes in Midian: Go, return into Ægypt: for all the men are dead which ſought thy life*, Exod. iv. 19. So the Angel of the Lord ſaid to Joſeph, in almoſt the ſame words, *Ariſe and take the young child, and go into the land of Iſrael; for they are dead which ſought the young child's life*, Mat. ii. 20. pointing him out, as it were, for that Prophet who ſhould ariſe like unto Moſes.

FINIS.

00066960

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016